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THE SIMPLE LIFE

BY

CHARLES WAGNER

Pastor of the First Lutheran Church, at Paris, France, and author of "Youth (*Jeunesse*);" "Valor (*Vaillance*);" "The Voice Within (*Voix Interieure*;" "Be a Man! (*Sois un Homme*);" etc., etc.

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH

BY

HENRY LLEWELLYN WILLIAMS

Author of "The Boys of the Bible," etc.

WITH THE AUTHOR'S PREFACE

and

AN ORIGINAL MEMOIR OF HIS LIFE

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MEMOIR OF CHARLES WAGNER, AUTHOR OF "THE SIMPLE LIFE."

A French poet has pathetically condoled with the mothers of the time of the Great Napoleon's downfall, that their sons should have been born to the thunder of the death-dealing cannon and the wails of the wounded. But while the birth of our subject occurred when the Second Empire was in its ephemeral glory his youth was to be surrounded by that same awful salutation of cannon and mutilated humanity around the fall of another Napoleon but not another hero.

Charles Wagner was born at Wieberville or Webersburg, (as the case may be put according to the German or French distinctions,) a hamlet in that perturbed border land between the two realms, where the strange sight has been witnessed of a people delivered by their former brothers, repudiating the fraternal

hand and clinging to their first vanquishers.

It was the third of January, 1852, and the happy father was the pastor of the Dutch Reformed church at Webersburg. It was Sunday morning and the preacher came home from his duties to learn the news that a child was born to him. The season and the day, as well as "the cloth" influenced him; he "devoted his child to black," a saying for intending him for his own profession. Webersburg is a quiet place save for glassworks and potteries requiring wood for their furnaces, obtained in the then plentiful forests of the Vosges Mountains, overshadowing the village. The country folk remain primitive, honest, frugal, hard-working and reverent. At two years of age the boy was taken to another such hamlet, called Tieffenbach, where about a thousand honest souls were toiling and drudging without any intimation in the tranquil "blue Alsatian sky" of the song, that the gunpowder would yet cloud the vales and scorch the peaks. Indeed, the townlet is under the frown of Petite Pierre, a fort which was surrendered eventually to Germany. Our little Charles grew up in a family which increased to five, when they all lost their father. The scene can be

realized by those who have seen New England before the woodland was diminished, and reading the local tales of Erckmann-Chatrian will also help to picture the surroundings of the future moralist.

With her helpless brood the lone woman had to go home to her family. This was at Pfalzburg, where Marshal Lobau was born and which retains Napoleonic memories and those of the First Republic from the veterans who passed their life-ends here. In the intervals of going to the primary school taught by the rector for the Protestants, the Wagner children roamed the woods and fields, eking out their plain bran bread with wild fruit and drink from the many springs. The rivers Meurthe and Moselle traverse this district, and the wine is celebrated. As soon as the boy was old enough to be useful he was crow-scarer in his off hours and otherwise worked for the farmers. But the Lutheran dominie had heard of the paternal vow to bring the orphan up as a minister and he applied himself like a new parent to this pious task. Though the pupil had native liking for the field work, with its communing with nature, he took kindly to book study. For he ac-

quired the rudiments of Latin and Greek from the Scriptures. He even went so far as to read Homer as pastime out in the woods and vales—a true "academy." The boy was using German as his tongue but an inkling of French was given him, as on this debatable land both are employed indifferently, though the peasants maliciously pretend not to understand German when addressed by one of that nationality in authority.

As the student was not an ordinary boy, so was the kind pastor something of a seer; he divined that the disciple would be worthier than the master. This Pastor Kulm was indeed writing a life of *his* patron saint, Martin Luther, and was qualified to plant a literary basis. This pebble from the brook might acquire a brilliant polish, and like David's, slay a giant in its time.

Seeing the attempts fruit, the good father persevered and urged the mother to carry out the paternal direction: send the youth to the capital for preparation in his mission. The lad had remained rustic in spite of the tuition, for it was with all the greenness of the provincial that he arrived in Paris by railroad train, in 1866. The change from a village

struck him with endless surprise. Think that he had studied the Testament by rushlight dips, so what must gas and electric light have been to him in the "City of Light!" In that metropolis the uncouth youth was to labor some twenty years. In the meantime it was a burdensome stone cage, where the air was thick with dust and smoke, the uproar deafening, and the restless hosts gave the vertigo. Wagner suffered all the pangs of the country youth in a great city, homesick and with aching heart but ill solaced by the friendship his endearing spirit already won him with his fellow students in divinity. He studied at the Sorbonne group of universities, old as Paris itself, saturated with the spirit of the modern theological Fathers. He was captivated by Spinoza the Pantheist and the German mystics, from his native bias, no doubt.

Having in 1869 attained the title of bachelor of arts he entered his name at the Strasburg University, the intention being to make use of his knowledge of German, which was so far stronger than his French acquirements. He was a cultured scholar. If the reader will notice his handwriting, incredibly fine even to presenting some difficulty in being read, he

will recognize without being a chirographic expert the student trying to save time in annotation by habitually using his own system of longhand abbreviated, especially in terminations of long words. I do not know that, like Jules Simon, he had patience to transcribe a long sermon some seventeen times for learning diction, but such eminence in patience, application and desire for accuracy would not surprise.

Inter arma, silent leges. During the Franco-Prussian War, the theological student had naturally nothing to do "in that galley." He was assiduously studying and placed at Strasburg as soon as that hallowed hall of learning was purged of the battle smoke. He was twenty in 1872, when he took a holiday into Switzerland, where the hoary mountains lifted up his soul from the limit of the Vosgian hills which he had thought Himalayas in his boyhood. He led the traditional students' life of "beer and bluster," apparently, but was in fact solidly strengthened for his life task. On his return home after a long absence, in 1873, his old tutor acknowledged that he was on the right road and had but to persevere. He prepared for the second bout which was to be at

Göttingen University in another year. Amid the pastoral surroundings, for which he never lost the first love, he was still the robust country lad in physique, able to take tramps of thirty miles for recreation.

On completing the theological curriculum at Göttingen, in 1875, he was passed as fit to take up the crook. So he became a 'prentice hand to the ministry for a year at a petty rectory in the St. Odille Mountains, assistant to an aged preacher. A curious resort and calculated to fill a brain with the most miscellaneous images for reference in lecture or sermon. Over this soil have passed the Goth and the Vandal, Russ and retreating French, and yet the plain denizens, though racked by internecine war, are brotherly unless to the new governors; fays from Perrault dance with kobolds and goblins out of Grimm; rocks are bloodstained where victims of massacres fill a hetacomb, and shy corners have the wooden-cross for a humble hero. But the most remarkable feature and one exhaled in Wagner's most fervid pages is the breath for freedom; it comes from the fire of the First Revolutionary hosts, who behaved brutally if you will, but yet left, wherever they camped, seeds of

liberty, equality and fraternity never to be trodden out.

His probation expired, the young preacher settled in a parsonage of his own, at Remiremont, in the French Vosges, on the River Moselle, but latterly Germanic, without being Germanized.

This ministry was Wagner's first independence, as while in Paris, he had been compelled to support himself by going out as a tutor. This experience had left its live root, for he was using, in preaching to the mixed population, the two languages current, and he had a yearning for France. Indeed, in her agitation after the Republic and the Commune, all persons with a talent for reconciling and appeasing were needed, born or adopted.

In the meantime he had married a fellow-countrywoman, an Alsatian, but it appears that the loss of their first-born led her to acquiesce in this turning towards the stranger. It was this bereavement which impregnates his works with unweakening sorrow and inspires lines in his "The Voice Within" (Voix Intérieure), for the lad was his constant companion and it had been his desire to bring him up to tread the thorny path which his own father

had directed him into. At this time there was a vacancy for a Lutheran preacher at the French capital. The famous Protestant pastor, Athanase Coquerel, the Henry Ward Beecher of France, so to say, had once held it in his early career. Wagner held the like broad and tolerant views and might be expected to suit the forlorn little congregation. Coquerel had "crossed the Jordan" in 1875, but his memory was ever green.

It was in this little haven that Charles Wagner renewed his Parisian experience and became remarked as a local leader. Paris is never still; it is a vexed sea, into which some fiery meteor drops to set the whole seething. The Republic was not firmly based; rats were undermining; above board the two branches of the Bourbons disputed their claims to a throne already carted into the waste-yard; the defeated Reds sulked and scowled; the military party, their hope shattered by the death of the Prince Imperial and the holding aloof of the later Napoleon candidate, a Russian captain, bolstered up General Boulanger, whose attempt at a *coup de main*—too feeble to be a *coup d'état*—was a fiasco; all was in turmoil when the news spread that a voice had

arisen in the desert of Paris the popular.

It was the more remarkable as the voice came from that brave but limited body, the liberal Protestants, the remnant of the Huguenots, who have kept the sacred flame of reverent opposition to the Established Church ablaze since Henry IV. It is not to be confused with the Puritans like Guizot, who are as stern and fanatical in their way as the old Churchmen in theirs. Add to the undying warfare between the Roman Catholics and the Dissenters the cohort of Freethinkers, Reformers, Extremists, Socialists, Humanitarians, and even, as Dean Swift would say, the Nothingarians, fierce as any, together with the Jews—the discord may be imagined, for it cannot be understood out of France.

Out of his little castle, like those knights who were redressers and sallied to curb the robber barons, Parson Wagner trumpetted not a challenge to add another warrior to the strife but an appeal for truce—for cessation of the brotherly feuds and an audience for peace, humanity and social concord. It was the Good Samaritan coming up while the highwaymen were maltreating the poor man fallen by the way and asking them, them! to lend a hand

in taking him into the inn for his wounds to be bound up and his lodging secured.

Freedom from sectarianism and devotedness to his fellow citizen, it was a revolutionary of a new type thus presented.

All Paris wished to learn who was this new St. John who did not wear sack cloth or eat locusts. He was known as preaching so well in the old Coquerel rostrum that spellbound hearers urged him to expand his mission. They hired a room upstairs in a flat where he spoke to a handful of admirers. They bruited the discovery so that more wealthy worshippers engaged a hall on the Beaumarchais Boulevard—formerly "the Boulevard of Crime!" and he filled it time and again; the hearers numbered more men than women—a startling fact, as in France none but women go to church save on two occasions in a lifetime: marriage and the funeral, they say. Whereupon all Paris flocked to the hall in the people's ward. They were met by an unexpected sight. The orator was not what they anticipated by memories of the noted preachers of Paris, usually ascetics, thin, scholarly, wailing Jeremiads, promising the traditional week's rain of gunpowder and the night of the shoot-

ing stars to fire it, for modern Babylon. This was no monastic figure or if resembling such a one faintly that of his prototype Luther, the head of his branch of the Universal Church. Robust, broad-shouldered, sunburnt, sturdy, standing four-square to all enemies of the country and the home. His voice delighted while impressing those who gloried in Delauney, Mounet-Sully or the Noble-fathers of the stage—for, alas! Lacordaire, Hyacinthe and Coquerel might as well have been Massillon or Bossuet for all Parisian men knew of preachers! More than the sonorous and penetrative voice was this—*Vox populi*, the tone and the impulse. Here was earnestness— belying the actor's jest; he spoke of what had happened as though he had seen it happen! Here was loving kindness, embracing all sorts and conditions, beckoning to the Extremists, calling on the disputants, inveigling against the disunionists as the worst traitors. Others had pleaded for the throne, the curule chair, the flag, the treasury—he asked reverence, adoration, respect for that almost forgotten thing: Home! which, for him, was still in the French language.

When the great Napoleon wished on the eve

of battle to win that coming onslaught he called on the band to play "Where is there Happiness but in the Bosom of the Family!" This air, certainly not warlike, fired the veterans with thoughts of the earth to which victory might enable them to return, and, needless to say, they charged with that *furia Francceese* which won the day. There is nothing derogatory to Wagner's perception of the family instinct, generally considered weak in his countrymen, for in another instance he would have approved of the great Emperor's similar insight, though as a Corsican he was not judging his own people. At the crisis in the battle of Waterloo, Napoleon observed a new addition to the enemy in a column of British. "What veterans are these newcomers?" he inquired eagerly and perplexed, as he thought Wellington's old soldiers were already in the posts confronting him. "They are," replied an officer of the staff, smiling a little, "not old soldiers, your Majesty, but old raw men—for they are the City of London militia, tradesmen and shopkeepers." "Ah," sighed the general, "so much the worse. They are fathers of families and they will fight the more earnestly in order to get home again to their wives and

children. I think I should have preferred merely old soldiers than such raw recruits." In fact, after dwelling among the French or even the Parisians, the idea that they are not domestic must be recalled.

So Pastor Wagner told the Parisians to look to their homes and wives and children. To the gadabouts, clubmen, ladies of the tea-meetings, chairmen of debating halls he preached "To your tents, O Israel."

He besought all to lay aside their differences and for the sake of France to take up the simple life of citizen, patriot and father of the family. It was like Pentecost when he called for formation of a Trust for Good! Thus he founded the Union for Moral Action. The volunteers were many, for at last was found a preacher who was human—the coward's castle of the satirist contained a brave man! His doctrine was from Terence, he has said it: *"Homo sum!"* "All that becomes a man affects me, being also a man!"

Inquirers learnt then, further, that the pastor was well known among the common people, having organized Young People's Christian Associations, agitated this social union by correspondence, carried on heart-to-heart

talks with all he met and to all who came to see under any guise. These soon shared his sentiments and some in his practical undertakings for humanity. Freethinkers submitted to so light a scepter and Roman Catholic prelates were more than his friends—they, too, were active cooperators.

But this victory in the City of Vanity, brilliant as it was, did not tempt him to be admired of the learned—he remained true to the gospel of "the Christ humanitarian" of Sabatier and the pioneers of 1840-48,—derided then—honored since.

When Wagner might have been the honored orator at noted boards, he was at home, listening to the plaints of the sorely laden. Those who know something of the constant and silent work of the Alsager Hay Hills and their compeers in London at this time, will recall that Paris by Wagner was also shaken to the base and corrupting dust whirled afar.

So Pastor Wagner was to be seen constantly attentive on his daily walks to old women and young children on the street, and particularly to any burden bearer. He carried out as a working motto Napoleon's beautiful words, at St. Helena, when he was also bearing his far-

del: "Room for the burden bearer!" and making his bedizened staff stand to one side while a poor wood-gatherer passed the ex-Emperor bowed under his faggots. He who had saluted the flashing sabres and deep-dyed bayonets of Friedland took off his hat to the porter. So Wagner in meeting the "commissionaires," to use his words, "would fain have taken the charge upon his own shoulders." He was also seen following the pauper's hearse, taking the *non-est* mourner's place, for the unknown dead —unknown to him as to all the world, so that one by one, fellow citizens, silently reminded of their duty to their departed brother, likewise bared the head and joined in the respectful march; he would not let the impressive occasion pass without fruit, but would shift his place so as to speak one by one with others in this solemn pageant, whether recognized as parishioner or not; some were glad, seeking relief at the sudden shock that they in the great city might yet be carried to the grave "unwept, unhonored and unsung."

He was not one-sided, looking on the gloom only.

For he was not always seen at such distressful encounters. On Sundays, between sermon

and lecture, he would lead a flock of workingmen out into the fields where they might see other flowers than were in the paintings they painted or the stone they carved; it was he who introduced Workingmen's Colleges in France, where they are now five-score with twenty in Paris; thus he educated the masses. This was active Christianity as compared with that styled Muscular.

Nevertheless, Dives was not to be denied; after all Lazarus might have had compassion on him; the pastor for the tainted and black sheep heard the bleat of the blue-beribboned lambs; he responded to an appeal from the aristocratic part of Paris known as St. Germain's; like all loquacious people the French dote upon eloquence without always discriminating as to the text or the sentiment; the tone suffices them. They greeted the new Chrysostom as though of their church, though he did not abate his plain spokenness for all the perfume of the drawing-room.

But all could not be enraptured and persuaded by the voice which has its range. As the Pamphletist Courier said: "To speak is well, but to write is better." Wagner wrote so that

the four winds would carry the new gospel to the ends of the earth.

In an enforced leisure, when on a holiday in the South of France,—the preacher was ordered here by his physicians after overwork—he had composed several essays. Published, they read who had not heard him.

His literary works became numerous, and more than one was classic of its sort. We may enumerate "Justice," "Youth," (chosen as a text-book for schools by the Instruction Bureau), "Valor," "Beside the Road," "By the Fireside," "Be a Man!" "The Spirit of Things," "The Voice Within," a monody in prose which. outflowing from his grief over his son Benjamin, is a kind of "In Memoriam," etc.

But foremost of all is the essay on "The Simple Life." While novel, appropriate to the situation in his country, it had worldwide application. In our Republic its terse phrases and trenchant passages, its heartfelt outbursts and patriotic appeals went straight to the mark—"It is a poor sermon that does not hit me somewhere," confessed the average American and we took the work to our hearts. Shakespeare was patronized by Queen Eliza-

beth, Sir William Davenant by King Charles, and Molière by King Louis the Great—we have no king, and our President is but the voice of the people—but the Roosevelt commendation on this offset to "The Strenuous Life" was frank, strong and merited. He went so far as to assure the author that he was "preaching his book to his fellow-countrymen."

After the warm reception of the book, the author was invited to visit us and redouble the good impression by lecturing in person. He confirmed the verdict the President had not refrained from passing on him; unable to abstain from declaring that "such wholesome, sound doctrines I could wish used as a tract in our country." And ex-Postmaster-General Wanamaker philanthropically proclaimed " 'The Simple Life' the most fitting of Christmas presents." Wagner paid us a great compliment, too. As he had learnt French to convert the Parisians to the better way, he acquired English to speak to us face to face. So we liked this man for living himself the Simple Life and talking about it so as to induce others to take the same step.

We can best return that compliment by

treasuring or rather disseminating his watch-word:

"Seek in Simple Life, not a refuge but inspiration for perfecting it to fulfil its highest and most exacting obligations."

THE TRANSLATOR.

AUTHOR'S PREFACE.

When the fever-stricken patient is undermined with heat and craving with thirst, he dreams in his dozing of a fresh brook where he might bathe or a clear spring where he might drink in long drafts. In the same way, in the complex agitation of modern existence, our wearied souls yearn for simplicity.

Is what is adorned by this fine name a boon forever wished? I do not so think. We would have to give up realising simplicity if it were only found linked with exceptional circumstances, and at rare occasions solely known. Civilisation can no more be restored to origins, than the billowy stream can be brought back to the tranquil vale where the willow boughs met over its source.

But simplicity does not depend on any particular social or economical conditions; it is much more a mood which may animate and

modify lives of quite different classes. Far from being reduced to chase it with our powerless looks, I affirm that we can make it the object of our resolutions and the goal of our practical energy.

To yearn for simple living, is to long to fulfil the highest human destiny. All humanity's movements towards brighter light and purer justice, are at the same time towards plainer living. Antique simplicity, in arts, manners, and opinions, keeps its incomparable meed for us because it has succeeded in giving powerful relief to some lasting truths and essential feelings. Such simplicity must be loved and piously guarded, even enforcedly. But he who clings to outer forms and seeks not to embody its spirit, will not go a tithe of the way. Even though it were impossible for us to dwell simply in our fathers' mode, we could be so or become so in the same mind. We tread other paths, but ever the goal of mankind is the same at bottom; none but the North Star still guides the seaman whether on the sailer deck or the steamer's.

To proceed towards this aim with our dispositions, that is the main point this day as heretofore. It is because we have often

strayed, that we have embroiled and complicated our life.

I shall not have labored in vain if succeeding in having others share in this inner notion of simplicity: a notion which some readers will think ought to enter into manners and education. Let them begin by cultivating it in themselves and make the sacrifice to it of some of the habits which prevent us being true men.

Too many cumbersome inutilities part us from the ideal of truth, justice and kindness, which should warm and revive the heart. This screen, under pretence of sheltering us, has finally kept off the light. When will we have the courage to oppose the deceptive temptations of a life so mixed and unfruitful, with the sage's reply:

"Take yourself out of my sunshine!"

PARIS, May, 1895.

THE SIMPLE LIFE.

CHAPTER I.

OUR COMPLICATED LIFE.

EVERYTHING is topsy-turvy in the Blanchards' house, and truly there is good reason for it: just know that their daughter Yvonne is going to be married on Tuesday next, and this is the Friday before!

The file is endless of visitors loaded with presents, and messengers bending their backs under the ordered goods. The servants are at their wits' ends. As for the family connections and those of the family to be connected with, they are homeless. All day long they are flying about to the dressmakers', modistes', upholsterers', cabinet-makers', jewellers', and

so on; or flitting through the room where the carpenters and painters are busy. Or else rapidly running to the lawyers' offices where they have to wait their turn, watching the clerks scratching away under the shade of the high stacks of documents. After this, there is hardly time to hurry home and dress for the series of ceremonial feasts: the dinner to the betrothed at the reception, after the signing of the civil marriage contract, and then the suppers at evening parties and after the ball. In the neighborhood of midnight, one may get home, tired out, but only to meet all the belated parcels and a frightful heap of correspondence: congratulations, compliments, acceptances or refusals from the best man, the bridesmaids or the pages of honor; excuses of the tradesmen behind time. And, then, the hitches of the last hour: the sudden death upsetting all order in the procession, the vile cold which prevents the actress, "amateur star," singing to the organ, and the like. It is tantamount to beginning all over again.

Poor Blanchards! they will never be ready, though they prided themselves on having forethought of everything and foreseen it all.

Such has been their existence during so

long a month. No chance of catching a free breath! of reflecting for a space, or exchanging a word on the quiet—"This is not a life worth living! dear me!"

Luckily, there is the grandma's rooms. Grandma is touching her eightieth year. Having undergone a great deal and worked a lot, she has grown to look upon things with the same steadiness as lofty intelligence and loving hearts bring to bear upon her life. Almost always seated in her easy chair, she enjoys the silence of long, thoughtful hours. So the whirl of business, blustering through the house, stops respectfully on her sill. On that, voices appease before this asylum, and feet tread carefully. If ever the young couple wish a brief respite, they flee to Grandma.

"Poor creatures!" she will then say to them, "how you are harried! Rest awhile and act like one another's. That is the main thing. The rest is a trifle! It does not do to let the others swallow you up!"

The young pair know that is so. How many times, in the last few weeks, has not their love had to yield to all sorts of rules, requirements and stupidities! They are fretted at this decisive moment of their life, by the

fatality incessantly detaching their mind from the essential point to urge them through the multitude of secondary occupations. They eagerly approve of the grandmother's opinion when, between smile and kiss, she says:

'It is quite clear, children, that the world is getting too involved, and it does not tend towards making folks happy—quite the other thing!"

* * * * * * *

I am of the good old lady's mind. From the cradle to the crypt, in needs as in sports, in himself and worldly conceptions, modern man is battling with numberless puzzles. Nothing is done plainly now; neither thinking, acting nor sporting and not even dying. With our own hands we have added a mass of difficulties to life and curtailed many pleasant accompaniments. I am persuaded that, at the time being, thousands of my equals suffer from the consequences of too fallacious life. These would be very glad if we should give expression to their uneasiness and encourage them in their regret for simplicity, which worries them vaguely.

First, let us enumerate a series of facts

putting in relief the truth we are wishful to show.

Life's complications seem to us to appear in the multiplications of our material needs. One of the universally acknowledged phenomena of the age is that our needs enlarge with our resources. This is no ill in itself, as the arising of certain wants marks progress. It is a token of superiority to feel the desire to bathe, wear fine linen, dwell wholesomely, eat with some attention, and cultivate the mind. But while there are needs of desirable birth and a right to live, there are others exerting baneful influence and maintaining themselves at our cost like parasites. It is the numbers and the imperious character of these that plague us.

If it could have been predicted to our forefathers that mankind would one day have at its beck all the engines now at hand to keep and defend material existence, they would have concluded on augmentation of independence in the first place, and, in the second, on a great lessening of the competition for the goods of life. Moreover, they would have good grounds for thinking that the simplification of existence, result of such perfected

means of action, would have allowed higher morality to be effected. Nothing of the sort has outcome: neither social peace, happiness nor energy for well-doing has increased. To begin with, does it strike you that your fellow-citizens, as a body, are more contented than their foregoers and more sure of the morrow? I do not ask if they have reasons for feeling so, but are they so? Looking at them, it appears to me the majority are discontent with their lot, intent on their bodily needs and possessed with dread of the next day. Never has the question of bed and board been keener and more engrossing than since we have been better housed, fed and clad than heretofore. That man is wrong who imagines that the question: "What shall we eat and drink—and with what shall we clothe ourselves?" is posed only to the wretches without food and shelter. It is so natural to them that it is put plainly there nevertheless. You must go to them who begin to enjoy a little welfare to understand how their satisfaction for it is spoilt by the regret of what is lacking. And if you would observe the care for material future in all its luxurious development, look at those men in easy circumstances and, above all, the

wealthy. Women who have but one dress, are not those who most fret about what to wear, as those restricted to the necessaries worry the most as to what they will eat the next day. By a necessary consequence of the law, craving grows by being nourished, we have: "The more man has, the more he wants!"

The more strongly one is assured of the future, the more he is doomed to worry about his livelihood, and his children's, and how he can settle them and their descendants. No idea can be given of the fears of the independent man, their hosts, their range and their refined ramifications.

From this results general turmoil, through all the social layers, and with varying intensity according to conditions; a very mixed state of mind best compared to that of children spoilt by satiety but yet unsatisfied.

While we are not become happier, we are not more pacific or brotherly. Spoilt children are the very ones oftenest quarrelling and most bitterly. The more wants and wishes, the more occasions man finds to dispute with his fellows, and these conflicts are the more hateful as they are unjust. It is natural law

to fight for food and needs. It may seem brutal, but it has excuse in its very harshness and, generally is limited to rude cruelties. All outside is the battle for superfluity, ambition, privileges, whims, sensual joys. Never did hunger drive a man to commit the base deeds due to ambition, greed, and this lust for unmeet pleasures. In proportion to its refinement, selfishness grows more malevolent. We have witnessed an aggravation of the hostile spirit among fellow-citizens and our hearts are less appeased than ever.

After that, is it useful to ask if we are become better? Is not the nerve of benevolence in man's capacity to love something beyond himself? Now, what room is there left for the neighborly life sacrificed to material preoccupations, to mainly artificial longings, to satisfy ambition, rancor and freaks? The man who makes himself fully servant of his appetites only bids them thrive and multiply until he is their slave. Once that, he loses the moral sense and energy, and becomes incapable of distinguishing the good and practising it. He has delivered himself over to the interior anarchy of desires of which the external anarchy will at length spring forth. Moral

life consists in self-rule, as immorality in letting our lusts and passions govern us. So, gradually, the bases of moral life are displaced and the balance of judgment deviates.

For the slave of numerous and exacting demands, to own is the eminent boon—the source of all others.

It is true that in the incarnate rush for the spoils, men come to hate their possessors and deny any right of property when others exercise it and it is not in our hands. But the eagerness to assail the owners is a fresh proof of the extraordinary importance we attach to possession. Men and things end with being esteemed according to the venal value and the profit to be drawn from them. What brings nothing is worthless, and he who wants is nobody. Honorable poverty risks fair to pass for a shame, and even foul money has not too much difficulty to count as well as merit.

"Stay!" it will be objected, "are you condemning modern progress by wholesale, and do you try to bring us back to the 'Good Old Time'—to asceticism, perhaps?"

Not the least in the world. The most sterile and dangerous of utopias, is trying to re-

vive the past, and the art of living properly is not in retiring from life. But in order to find a remedy, we are seeking to bring out into the light one of the errors weighing most heavily on social progress, to wit: does man become better and happier by enhancing his outer welfare? Nothing is falser than this pretended social axiom. On the contrary, the lessening of the capacity of being happy and the bemeaning of character by material comfort without counterpoise, form a fact for which there are thousands of examples to establish it. Civilisation is merely the worth of the man in its centre. When man lacks moral direction, all progress ends but in making badness worse and still farther embroiling social problems.

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This principle can be verified in other fields than mere welfare, if only to mention instruction and liberty. The time can be recalled when prophets—and well-listened-to prophets, too—announced that to restore bad lands into a pleasure-ground for the gods, all one had to do was fell those three old coalised powers: want, ignorance and tyranny. At present, other prophets repeat the like. We

see that the evident lessening of poverty does not make man happier or better. Has that result been reached in measure by laudable care for education? That does not yet appear, and it is the gall and anguish of those devoted to national education. It follows that the people must be stupefied, universal knowledge suppressed and the schools closed?

In no wise! but learning, the same as all the civilising engines, is only a tool—all depends on the worker who uses it.

It is the same as regards freedom: it is injurious or salutary according to its employment. Is it still free when belonging to evil-doers or even the fitful, mischievous and disrespectful fellow? Freedom is a rarified atmosphere of life which man cannot breathe until prepared for it by a slow and patient inner transformation.

All lives must have a law; man's even more than the lower beings; for man's life and society's are more precious and delicate than plants' and animals'. For man this law is firstly outward, but it may become internal. Hence, man has acknowledged such inner law and bowing to it, he is thereupon ripe for

freedom, respect and voluntary obedience. So long as he knows no strong and sovereign inner law, he is unfit to breathe the air of freedom. It would intoxicate him, drive him mad and, morally, kill him. A man who is swayed by the inner law cannot abide under that of outer law, any more than a full-grown bird could live again in the eggshell; but the one who has not yet reached the moral point of ruling himself, he can no more live under the dome of freedom than a chick deprived of the protective shell. These things are dreadfully simple, and the schedule of their old and new proofs grows under our eyes. And yet we are still always prone to mistake the elements of a law so important. In our democracy, how many, grand or petty, have understood this truth from having verified it, lived and, sometimes, suffered under it—without which a people is incapable of self-rule? Freedom is respect; obedience to the inner law which is neither the good pleasure of the mighty nor the whim of the mob, but the impersonal and superior rule before which they who command must be the first to bow. Are we to say, therefore, that freedom is to be suppressed? Nay; but we must make our

selves capable and worthy of it, otherwise public life would become unbearable, and a nation will wend its way through license and lack of discipline into demagogy's inextricable coils.

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When one reviews the peculiar causes troubling and entangling our social life, under any name you like—and the enumeration would be lengthy!—they bring us all to a general head and that is: "Confusion of Accessories with the Essential." The frame of the picture is the sum of civilisation, education, freedom, welfare; but the frame no more makes a picture than the uniform makes a soldier. Mankind here is the subject, and man with what is most innate—his conscience, his character and his will. And while they were carving and gilding the frame, the picture was neglected, forgotten, and damaged. So we have overwhelmed with outer and wretched boons the spiritual life. We have plenty of blessings—without which, at a pinch, we could do—and yet we are infinitely poor for the things solely needed. And when our deeper self awakens, with a yearning to love, and hope, and realise its destiny, it feels the agony

of a live man buried. It stifles beneath the heap of matters secondary, which weigh on it and deprive it of air and light.

The true life must be freed, disengaged, and restored to honor; everything must be put in its place; and it must be borne in mind that the centre of human progress lies in moral culture.

What is a good lamp? not the one cast of the most valuable metal, and most ornately chiselled. No, the good lamp is the one which sends out the best light. In like manner, he is the man and citizen, not from the quantity of property and pleasures afforded him, his intellectual and artistic accomplishments, honors or the independence he enjoys, but the solidity of his moral fibre.

At no age has the outer adornment won by his knowledge or industry dispensed man from thinking of his inner state. Around us changed the worldly front; the factors of existence, material and intellectual, are modified. None may oppose this change, with an abrupt character which ofttimes may be perilous. But the main thing is that man, amid the modifying circumstances, should be a man, living his life and marching towards his mark.

To do so, whatever the route, the traveller must not be lost in the by-roads and let useless burdens encumber him. Let him look to the course, to his powers and to his honor, and the better to concentrate himself on the whole aim—which is to advance!—let him simplify his baggage, even at the cost of sacrifices.

CHAPTER II.

THE SPIRIT OF SIMPLICITY.

It is necessary to define simplicity in its very principle before we can show in what the practical return to it, as we all desire, consists. For the same error is committed with respect to it that we have heretofore denounced: confounding the vial with the essential—the shape with the core. One is apt to believe that simplicity offers outward tokens by which it can be recognised and of which it consists. Simplicity and plain condition, modest garments, a dwelling not showy, the happy medium, poverty, these seem to chime together. But it is not the case. I may meet three men on my road; one lounging in his carriage, another riding his horse and the third going barefoot; but it does not follow that the last is the most simple of the three. Indeed, he who rode in his coach may be the

plain man, spite of his grand situation and no slave to his wealth. It may e'en chance that the man in riding-boots does not envy the man in the carriage and does not scorn the one in naked feet. And, lastly, it is possible that in the mud and with their dust upon his tatters, the tramp has a hatred for simplicity, work, and sobriety, dreaming of nothing but the easy life, revelry, and idleness. Among the least simple of men may be reckoned professional beggars, parasites, hangers-on, the whole troop of the obsequious and envious whose aspirations are thus summed up: "Let us but get hold of a scrap of the quarry, which the happy ones are trying to keep to themselves!" And in this same list write—no matter to what class they belong—the ambitious, the rakes, the effeminate, the avaricious, the arrogant, and the ultra-refined. Never mind the livery—one must see the heart. No class has the privilege of simplicity—no garb, however humble it may appear, is its certain cognizance. Its dwelling is not necessarily in the attic, the cottage, the hermit's cell or yet the poorest fisher's boat. Under all the phases of life, in all social locations, at the foot as well as the top of the ladder, there are plain fel-

lows and others who are not. By this we do not mean to say that simplicity does not betray itself by some outward sign, and has not its peculiar walk, individual tastes and own manners; but one must not confound these traits which might be impressed upon it, with its deep source and very essence. This source is wholly inward.

Simplicity is a spiritual state.

It abides in the central intention animating us.

A man is plain when his highest longing is to wish to be what he ought to be: namely, a man, plainly.

This is neither as easy nor as hard to be as may be imagined. In the main this consists in attuning one's acts and yearnings with the very law of our being, and logically with the eternal intention which willed that we should be. Let a flower be flower, a swallow a swallow, a rock a rock—and a man a man, and not a fox, or hare, a bird of prey or a pig—that is all.

We are thus brought to put in shape the practical idea of a man. In all life we notice a fixed quantity of forces and substances associated for an end. More or less crude mat-

ter is transformed and carried to a higher degree of organism. It is not otherwise with human life.

The human ideal should consist in thus transforming life into values higher than itself.

Existence may be compared to a prime matter. It less matters what it is than what you are to get out of it. As in a work of art, you should appreciate what the worker knew how to infuse into it. In being born, we are gifted differently. One has gold, another granite, the third marble and the others wood or clay, for the most part. Our task lies in working up these materials. All know that we may botch the most precious material but also that an immortal work may be drawn from worthless substances. Art rests in realising a permanent idea in a fleeting form. True life subsists in realising those uppermost blessings, love, truth, justice, freedom, moral energy in daily activity, whatsoever may be the outer form or place. And this career is possible under the most diverse social conditions, and with the most unequal natural gifts. It is not fortune or personal advantages which constitute the value of

life, but the gain we draw from it. The brilliancy is not more than the duration; the quality is the principal thing.

It is needful to say that one does not rise to this point of view without effort and struggle? The spirit of simplicity is not estate inherited, but the meed of laborious conquest. To live properly, as to think properly, is to simplify. Each one knows that science rests upon extracting from the maze of divers cases some general rules. But what long groping in darkness to end with discovery of these rules! Centuries of searching often merely condenses into one principle held by a thread.

In this point, moral life presents a strong analogy with that scientific. It also commences with marked confusion, tries, seeks on its own account, and often mistakes. But by continuing to act and sincerely weighing its deeds, it arrives at better understanding life. The law appears to it, and it is this: Fulfil your mission! Whoever applies himself to any other aim than realising this one, loses, in living so, the reason to be of life. So do the selfish, those who enjoy themselves and the ambitious. They consume existence as one

who grazes on the green grain, preventing it bearing. Their lives are lost ones. On the other hand, he who makes his life serve a benefit, saves it in giving it. Moral precepts, while seeming arbitrary to superficial gaze, and apparently made to cross our ardor to live, have, in short, but one object: to save us from the woe of living uselessly. That is why they bring us back constantly to the same direction and they have but the one same sense: "Do not fritter your life away! make it fruit! Learn how to give it so that it shall not be lost!" In this is summed up humanity's experience. As every man is obliged to go through it on his own behalf, it becomes the more precious to him as it costs the more. By it enlightened, his normal moral march becomes surer: he has means to "take his bearings," a mental rule by which he can test everything, and he becomes simple after being uncertain, confused and intervolved. By the constant influence of this same law growing in him and every day verifying it by facts, a transformation is produced in his judgments and habits.

In the heart is treasured all the fascination, once he has been captured by true life's beau-

ty and grandeur, and by all so saintly and touching in the strife of mankind for truth, justice and goodness. And the whole comes naturally to subordinate itself to this powerful and persistent engrossment. The necessary hierarchy of forces and powers is organized within him. The essential commands, the necessary obeys, and order springs out of simplicity. The mechanism of inner life may be compared to a military one. Through discipline an army is strong, and discipline abides in the inferior's respect for the superior and in concentration to one same end. Hence: when discipline relaxes, the army suffers. The corporal must not command the general. Examine with care your life, others' and society's. Every time that something halts or creaks, and hitches, or disorder ensues, the corporal has been ordering the general about. But where the law of simplicity penetrates all hearts, disorderliness disappears.

I despair of ever describing simplicity in a manner fitly for it. All the might of this world and, eke, its beauty, all veritable gladness, all that comforts and enhances hopefulness, all that throws a little light upon our

shady paths, all that lets in upon our lowly lives sublime purpose and immense future—all comes from simple beings, who have assigned another object to their desires than the passing quenching of their egotism and vanity, and who understood that the science of Life rests in knowing how to give it gainfully.

CHAPTER III.

THE SIMPLE MIND.

THERE is need to sweep clear, not barely our mind in its practical manifestations, but the domain of our ideas. Anarchy reigns in the human brain; we stumble among the thick brush, bewildered in the infinite details, without a pointer and direction.

As soon as man perceives that he has an aim, and that it is to be a man, he organises his mind in consequence. All ways of thinking, understanding and judging not rendering him better and stronger, are rejected as unwholesome.

At the start, he avoids the trifles which would sport with his wits. The mind is a weighty weapon, not a toy, and has its function in the mass. Take an example: a painter's studio; every tool has its place. All denotes that the arrangements of implements

is disposed towards an end to attain. Open that door to apes. They would climb upon the stages, swing by the ropes, drape themselves in the costumes, cap their heads with slippers, juggle with the brushes, taste all the colors, and pierce all the canvases to see what was behind. I do not suspect they would feel any fun in it, but it is certain that the exercise would afford them interesting work. But a studio is not made for monkeys' recreation-ground. In the same way, the brain is not a field for acrobatic evolutions. A man worthy of the name thinks as he is and as he loves; he goes about with all his heart and not with that detached and sterile curiosity which, under boast that all has been seen and made known before, exposes himself to never feeling one holy and deep-seated emotion and never doing a genuine act.

Another habit urgent for correction, an ordinary acolyte of factitious life, is the mania for ever self-examining and analysing. I do not urge man to disinterest himself about internal observation and examination of conscience. It is an essential element of good life to endeavor to see clearly into the mind and motives of conduct. But quite another thing

is prying—incessant application to watch one's living and thinking, and showing one's self up like a watch opened. It is losing time and getting out of trim. The man who, the better to prepare for a walk, should begin with a minute anatomical examination of his means of locomotion, would run the risk of dislocating himself before he took a single step. "You are supplied with all you want for walking; so, go ahead! Take heed not to trip and use your strength with discernment!" The seekers for microbes and the hagglers about scruples are reduced to inaction. A gleam of good sense suffices to tell that man is not made to keep staring at his navel, like the Hindoo fakir.

Good sense? Do you not agree that what we designate by that term has become as scarce as the good old customs? Common sense is an old story! We want something fresh! and we are looking for two Sundays in the week! For that would be the innovation the common people could not afford and it is so agreeable to have what others cannot enjoy! Instead of bearing ourselves like natural persons, using means indicated for them and placed at our

disposition, we must reach the most astonishing singularities by force of genius! Rather go off the rail than follow the straight line! All the bodily deviations and deformities treated by orthopædia give but a weak idea of the bumps, sprains, and disjointing inflicted on ourselves to step out of sound good sense. And we learn at our expense that one may not be deformed with impunity. After all, novelty is ephemeral. Nothing is lasting, but the immortal commonplaces; and if you stray off them you run into the most dangerous adventures. Happy are those who return and become simple again. Plain good sense is not, as many may imagine, the innate property of the first man who comes along, vulgar and trivial baggage which cost nobody anything. I compare it to those old popular songs, nameless and imperishable, which seem to have sprung out of the heart of the masses. Good sense is the capital, slowly and toilsomely accumulated by the labor of ages. It is a pure treasure, its value solely comprehended by one who has lost it or sees folk live without it. For my part, I reckon that no pains are too great to acquire and keep good sense, to make the eyes stay clear and the

judgment upright. A man takes care of his sword lest it loses temper or gets rusty. With stronger reason one ought to take care of his mind.

But this must be fully understood. A call to common sense is not one to the mind flatly, to positivism, which denies all that it cannot see or handle. For it is likewise a failure in common sense to try to absorb man in material sensation and make him forget the higher realities of the inner world. Here we touch a painful part, around which quiver the grandest human problems. We strive, indeed, to attain a conception of life, seeking for it through a thousand pangs and obscurities; and all verging upon spiritual reality becomes more and more agonising day after day.

Amid the grave embarrassment and momentary disorder accompanying great crises of thought, it seems more than ever difficult to extricate ourselves by simple principles. Nevertheless, the very necessity comes to our help as done for men of all time. After all, the procedure of life is terribly plain, arising from existence being so pressing and its imposition; it warns us by its forerunning the idea of our doing it by ourselves, and that none can

expect to live fitly until he has understood how to do so. We stand everywhere facing the facts, with our philosophies, explanations and beliefs, and it is this prodigious, irrefutable fact which recalls us into order when we are about to derive life from our reasonings and bids us wait to act until we shall have finished philosophising. This is the happy necessity which hinders the world from stopping when man is in doubt which is his right way. Travellers on a day's journey, we are swept along in a vast movement to which we are called to contribute, but which was not foreseen or measured in its entirety, or sounded as to its ultimate stretches. Our part is limited to faithfully filling the place of simple soldier, devolved upon us, and our mind should adapt itself to the post. Do not tell us that our times are harder upon us than our fathers' to them, for we see badly what we see afar, and, besides, it is with bad grace that we wail at not having been born in our grandfather's days. What we may least contestingly think about this subject is that since the world was created, it is far from easy to see clearly. In all times and everywhere, to think justly has been difficult. In this, the ancients had no privi-

lege above the moderns. And it may be added that there is no difference between men, considered from that point of view. Whether man obeys or orders, teaches or is taught, handles the pen or the hammer, it costs him as much to tell the truth, one with another. Such lights as man has acquired while advancing himself are no doubt of extreme use; but they also aggrandise the number and reach of problems. Never is the stumbling-block removed and intelligence still meets with the hindrance. What is unknown yet dominates us, and restricts us on all parts. But in the same way as we need not exhaust all the water sources to quench thirst, we need not know everything to live. Mankind lives and has always lived upon some few elementary *provisions.*

We are going to try to point them out. In the first place man lives by Trust. Thereby it has merely to reflect the little light in the dark room of all beings, to the measure of its conscious mind. Imperturbable faith in the universe's solidity and its intelligent guidance slumbers in all that exists. Trees, beasts and flowers—all such dwell in mighty calm, and entire safety. In the rain that falls, in the

dawn peeping, and in the rivulet running out to the sea—there is trustfulness. All that is seems to say: "As I am in being, therefore, I ought to be; there are sound reasons for this —let us abide tranquilly."

And thus man rests in trust. From the pure fact of living, he bears within him sufficient reason for his being—the warrant for assurance. It reposes on that Will which wished it to be. The foremost effort of our mind ought to be towards preserving that trust, and not letting it be disconcerted for a trifle; on the contrary to cultivate it and render it more personal and more evident. All is well that augments this trust in us, because thence is born tranquil energy, refreshed action, and the love of life and fecund labor. Fundamental confidence is the mysterious mainspring setting in movement all our actions. It nourishes us. Man lives thereby rather than by the bread he eats. Hence, whatever shakes that trust is bad—poison, not nutrition.

And unhealthy, all systems of thinking which attack the very fact of life to declare that evil. In this age, life had been too badly thought of, often. What is there astonishing

in the tree dying off when the roots were watered with corrosives? Yet there was a very simple reflection to oppose to all this philosophy of negation: "You assert that life is bad? very well! what is your remedy offered against it? Can you wrestle with it and suppress it? I am not asking you to suppress your life—that is, commit suicide, for how much forwarder would you be then? not only human life, but its obscure and lowermost base, that upward rush of existence which speeds towards the light and, according to you, races into misfortune—I ask you to suppress the willingness to live that vibrates through immensity—to suppress the source of life, in short. Can you do that? No! Then leave us in peace." Since none can put the curb on life, were it not better to learn to esteem it and employ it rather than try to disgust men with it? When food is found unfit, dangerous for health, you do not eat it. And when a certain kind of reasoning ravishes away our trust, joy and force, that should be rejected, sure that it is not only nourishment detestable for the brain but false.

There is nothing true to man but human thought, and pessimism is inhuman.

Farthermore, it lacks modesty as much as logic. To presume to denounce that prodigious thing known as Life as wicked, one ought to have seen it thoroughly and almost have been its maker. What a singular attitude take some great thinkers of our epoch! Really and truly, they bear themselves as if, in their salad days, they had made several little worlds of their own! But it was a long while ago, and they have repented of it, and decidedly it was such a little fault!

Let us feed ourselves with other meat; let us fortify our soul with comforting thoughts. For man, the truer a thing is the more it strengthens him.

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If mankind lives by trust, it also lives by hope. That is the form of trust leading for the future. All life is a result and an inspiration. Everything supposes a starting-point and another of arrival. The immense To-come is infinite hope. At the bottom of the box is hope, and it is reflected in the heart. Without hope there is no life. The same power that made us incites us to climb higher. What is the sense of this tenacious instinct urging us to progress? The clear sense is that some-

thing ought to be the travail of life—that there is a reward elaborated by itself but greater than itself whither it is mounting slowly, and that this doleful sower whose name is Man needs, like all sowers, to reckon on a morrow! Our story is that of invincible hope. Otherwise it would have ended long ago. To enable him to trudge under burdens, to grope in the night, to rise up after falls, and recover after ruins, not to give up though in death's maw, man needed to hope and to hope in spite of want of hope. That is the cordial upholding him. Had we had naught but logic, we should long since have drawn this conclusion: "The last word will be Death's!"—and we should have died of that thought. But we had hope, and that is why we lived and believe in life.

Suso, the grand mystic monk, one of the best men and most simple ever living, had one touching habit: every time he met a woman, the poorest and the oldest, he would respectfully draw out of her way, though it were to step into the puddle or the briars. "I do this," he would say, "in homage to the Holiest of Women!" Let us render homage similarly to hope; when we meet her—under guise of the

wheat blade piercing the snow, the bird covering her brood, the wounded creature to be picked up—help them and forward them on their way; the farmer who sows the field ravaged by the storm or hail; the nation repairing its losses and salving its wounds; no odds what are the outer aspect, humble or suffering—salute! When we meet such tales in legends, simple ballads, and frank beliefs, salute them, too! for it is the same Hope—the indestructible, immortal daughter of God! All hail!

We too little dare to hope. Our current men have contracted odd timidity. Into our heart has crept the fear that the heavens will fall—the climax of absurd dread, according to our Gallic ancestors. Does the drop of water have a dread of the ocean? the spark dread the sun? Our senile wisdom has realised this prodigy. It may be likened to old grumbling pedagogues whose chief office rests in snubbing prankish boys or the juvenile enthusiasm of our young wards. It is time to become children anew, to learn again to wring hands and open eyes widely before the mystery enwrapping us and remember that, despite our knowledge, we know very little—ex-

cepting that the globe is larger than our heads, which is a lucky thing for, being so capacious, it ought to contain unknown resources and some credit might be granted it without our being taxed with lack of foresight. Do not let us treat hope as creditors do an insolvent debtor. We must revive our courage and rekindle hope's holy flame. Since the sun is still shining, the earth flowering again, the bird building the nest, and the mother smiling on her babe, let us have the courage to be men and leave the rest to Him who numbered the stars.

As for me, I would I could find the inflammatory words to tell who ever has a beaten-down heart in these wishy-washy times: Raise your crest, still hope, for he is sure to be least duped whose audacity hopes the most! The simplest hope is nearer what will pass than the most well-reasoned despair!

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Another source of light upon our path is Kindness.

I am not one of those believing in man's natural perfection and that society corrupted him. The form of evil that most frightens me is the hereditary one. I have often found myself wondering how it is we have not been

mastered by that old virus envenomed by vile instincts, vices inoculated in the blood, and the mass of servitude leagued us by the past. There must have been some counterbane: that other thing was kindness.

Granting the unknown element hovering over our head, our limited reason, the poignant and contradictory enigma of destiny, falsehood, hatred, corruption, suffering and death—what are we to think—what do? To all the questions united, a grand mysterious voice has answered:

"Be Kind!"

Kindness must be divine, like hope and trust, since it cannot be killed! albeit so many powers are counter to it. Against it is the native ferocity of what is styled man's original beastliness; it has against it cunning, strength, interest and, worse than all, ingratitude. How can it pass white and unsullied among sullen enemies as the prophet of the sacred legend trod amid the roaring lions?

It is because its foes come from below, and it belongs to above. Their horns and fangs, their claws and eyes full of murderous fire, can do nothing against the swift wing soaring towards the heights and escaping them. Thus

it is kindness eludes the enemies' enterprises. Better than that, she sometimes has the splendid triumph of winning over her persecutors; the wild beasts, calmed, cower at her feet and obey her law.

In the very core of Christian faith the most sublime doctrine and the most human for those who may penetrate the deep sense is this: to save lost humanity, the invisible God hath come to dwell among us in the likeness of man, and it was not willed that He should be known by other than this watchword: "Be Kind!"

Reparative and consoling, sweet towards the unfortunate and even the wicked, kindness sends lustre from under her feet. It clarifies and simplifies. The part of her choice is most modest: bind up wounds, wipe away tears, allay misery, lull sorrowing hearts, forgive and conciliate. It is truly of this that we have the most need. So, since we are trying to think of the best mode to render thought simple, fruitful and truly conformable to our human fate, we sum up the method in these words: Trust, hope and be kind!

I do not wish to dishearten anybody from lofty speculations, or dissuade from leaning

towards problems about the Unknown, over the vast gulfs of science or philosophy. But there must be home-comings from such distant voyages towards the point where we stand, and often to the place where we were marking time without apparent headway. There are some living conditions and social complications into which thinkers, ignorant and learned, do not peer more clearly than others. The present era has oft confronted us with such situations, and I warrant that whoever wishes to follow our method will soon acknowledge that it had good in it.

As I have, in all this, skirted religious ground, at least, generally, I may be asked to tell, in a few plain words, which is the best religion; and I hasten to explain upon the subject. But perhaps one ought not to lay down the question as ordinarily done, by asking which is the best? Undoubtedly, religions have precise characteristics, and good parts and faulty ones are inherent in each. On pressure one may compare them, but such comparison is always mixed up with ingrained opinion or involuntary partiality. It would be better to put the question in another form and ask: "Is my religion good and how can I

tell if it be so?" The reply to that is as follows: "Your religion is good if vital and active; if it cherishes in you the feeling for the infinite worth of existence, trust, hope, and kindness; if it be the ally of your better part against the worse and, without pause, makes it appear that you should become a new man; if it makes aware that woe is a deliverance; if it augments in you respectfulness towards other consciences; if it makes you forgive more freely, your happiness less puffed up, your duty more dear and the outlook less darksome—if this be so, your religion is good, whatever its name. However rudimentary it is, fulfilling that office, it proceeds from the authentic source—it binds you to God and man.

"But does it, peradventure, serve to make you believe you are better than others, to squabble about the texts, to sour your face, to lord it over other consciences or yield your own to slavery, to soothe your scruples, to practise a creed by fashion and interest, or to do good because it will be repaid beyond the grave—Oh, then, though you invoke Buddha, Moses, Mahomet, or even Christ Himself—

your religion is worthless, for it parts you from God and man."

Maybe I have not the power to speak in this vein; others have spoken thus before me, greater than I am, notably, He who related to the scribe the Parable of the Good Samaritan. I pray to entrench myself behind such authority.

CHAPTER IV.

PLAIN SPEECH.

Speech is the great revealing organ of the mind, being the first visible form it takes. Like thought, like speech. To reform life with regard to simplicity, the voice and the pen require watching. Make speech as plain as the thought, as sincere and sure. Think rightly and speak frankly!

Mutual trust is at the base of social relations and this trust is fostered by our sincerity. As soon as sincerity falls off, confidence alters, connections weaken, and insecurity is born. This is true in the region of material and spiritual interests. With distrusted men it is as hard to carry on business and trade as to seek scientific truth, or pursue religious fellowship or to realise justice. Life becomes greatly perplexed when one is bound firstly to test everybody's words and intentions, and to

act upon the principle that all spoken and written is designed for illusion and to displace truth. This is our case. There are too many double-dealers, diplomatic souls, who play the knowing hand and devote themselves to commonly cheating, which is why there is so much trouble to learn the plainest things though they are the most important. What I say will probably suffice to show my mind, and individual experience might place here ample commentary with supporting illustrations. But I little hold to insist upon this head and other examples around me.

Formerly, men had restricted means of communication. It was fair to suppose that by perfecting and multiplying means of information light would increase.

Peoples learning to love one another by better acquaintance, and fellow-countrymen feeling a closer brotherhood bringing them together, would be more brightly enlightened upon all touching common life. When printing was begun, all shouted: "Let there be Light!" and it might be repeated with still more reason when reading and a taste for daily newspapers was spread. Why should not one have argued: two lights shed more light

than one, and many more than two; the more books and journals, the better we shall know what happens, and the writers of history after our time will be very happy from having hands full of documents. Nothing seemed more evident. Alas! this reasoning was based on machinery's qualities and powers, but with no reckonings on that human element everywhere the most important factor. It was found that the sophists, word-twisters, and calumniators, all rogues with oily tongues, and knowing better than the next man how to handle speech and type, largely profited by all means to multiply and expand thoughts. What ensued? That our contemporaries have all the trouble in the world to get at the facts about their own period and business. To match some few newspapers cultivating good international relations, and trying equitably to inform their neighbors as well as to study them without secret reservation, how many are there to scatter slanders and mistrust? How many factitious and inimical currents of public opinion created by false rumors and malevolent interpretation of deeds and talk? On home questions we are not much better informed than on foreign ones. It is not easy

to obtain disinterested notes upon commercial doings, industrial or agricultural, no more than on party politics or social tendencies or personalities mixed up with public matters. The more in the press we read, the more fogged we are. There come days when —after reading journals and admitting that they are taken at their word—the reader sees himself obliged to draw the following conclusion: there are hardly any but rot-spotted knaves about—the only sound ones being a few newspaper editors. But the latter part of the conclusion also falls in its turn: the editors defame one another as they clapperclaw. The reader has, then, under view a sight analogous to that represented by the caricature of "The Kilkenny Cats." After having eaten up all the creatures of their kind about them, the two last felines attack and each devours the other so that finally remains on the battlefield only two tails.

It is not only the common people left in bewilderment, but the educated—almost all of us. Everywhere are traps, pitfalls, wire-pulling—in politics, finance, business, and even in arts, sciences, literature and religion. There is one truth for exportation and another for

home consumption. It follows that all are cheated, for a man may be brought up in one trade but not in every kind, and those who deceive most cleverly are taken in when their turn comes around, and they want to rely on others' fair play.

The upshot of this style of smartness is the abasement of human speech. It is at once depreciated by those who misuse it as a dirty tool. There is no longer a single word respected by debaters, quibblers, and sophists, and all animated solely by their age to have the right or the pretence where their interest alone is weighty. Their punishment is to be obliged to judge others by their own rules: "Tell me what I shall make, and not the truth." They can no longer hold anyone as honest. This is a sorry state for men who write, speak and teach. How they must despise their hearers and their readers to face them under such colors! For a man keeping a footing of honesty, nothing is more revolting than the happy-go-lucky irony of an acrobat of the pen or tongue, trying to infuse belief into a few plain fellows full of trust. On one side are the yielding, sincerity and wish to be enlightened, and on the other the trickery mocking at the pub-

lic. But the liar little knows how he is deluding himself. His living capital is confidence, and nothing pairs with the popular confidence save its distrust when finding it was deceived. For a while the speculators upon simplicity may be followed. But after that time, the welcome turns into loathing; the door which laughed wide open, offers its wooden front, and the previously eager ears are also closed. Alas! not only do they close to evil but to good. There lies the crime of those who turn and twist the truth; they shatter general trust. We consider as calamity the depreciation of silver, Government securities falling, and credit ruined, but the greater woe is the loss of confidence—the moral credit given between honest men and making a word pass like a golden eagle. Down with the counterfeiters, speculators and wormeaten financiers, for they have brought even pure silver to be suspected! Down with the forgers by pen and speech, for they have led to neither man nor things being relied upon, and the value of what is spoken and printed is that of the notes on "the Bank of Elegance" which pass off upon the dupes as Bank of England bills.

Thus you see how urgent it is that every

man should watch over his tongue and keep it, control his pen and aspire to simplicity. No more roundabout phrases, not so much tergiversation, reticence and circumlocution! These serve but to tangle all. Be men and have but one speech. One hour of sincerity has done more for the world's weal than years of shuffling.

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A word here on a national failing applicable to those superstitiously fond of fine talk and stylish demonstrations. Admittedly, there should be no spite shown to those who relish elegant diction or delicate reading. My opinion is that one cannot too nicely say what he wants to speak. But it does not follow that the best passages written or spoken are those most daintily dressed out. Speech ought to serve the meaning and not be so substituted for it that it makes the original forgot under the ornamentation. The grandest sentences are those gaining the most by being plainly put; because, then, they are shown in their true lights; you must not trail over them even the fine gauze of pretty talk, or the fatal shadow to truth—Vanity in a fine talker or writer. Nothing is so strong and persua-

sive as plain talk. There are sacred emotions, cruel pangs, mighty self-sacrifices and impassioned enthusiasm, which a glance, a gesture or one outcry translates better than the finest phrase. What humanity holds most precious in the heart is most simply manifested. To persuade, the truth must be used, and some truths are more fully understood from plain lips—even though infirm ones—than from well-practised mouths and thundered with all the lung power. These rules are sound for everybody in everyday life. No one can imagine what gain will be accrued for moral life by constant observation of this principle: Be outright, sober, simple in the expression of feelings and beliefs, at home as abroad, never stepping over the line, faithfully translating what is within us, and, above all, bearing in mind what you are saying. This is the main point.

For the danger in fine talk is that it nestles up towards cleanly life. Such words are like those distinguished servants preserving their rank after laying down their duties, of whom royal courts offer examples. If you have spoken well and acted well, you have done so fitly. Enough!

How many are content with talking and believe that dispenses them from doing? And those listening are content with having done that much. This kind of life may be composed, all things considered, of a few finely turned phrases, a few dainty books, and a few tasty plays. As for practising what they so masterly laid down—not a thought of that! And if we pass out of the realm of talented men, into the lower tracts where the mediocre ply their craft, what do we see? In that cloudy medley, all those bustle who think we are here to gabble and hear gabbling—the immense and desperately dispiriting cohort of babblers, all who bawl and chatter and orate, and yet they fear they have not talked enough! They forget that the more noise the less work. An engine which blows off all its steam whistling will have none left for turning the wheels. Therefore cultivate silence. All that we save from bluster will go towards strength in production.

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These reflections conduct us into occupying ourselves on a kindred subject quite worthy also to engage attention: I wish to al-

lude to what may be styled exaggeration in language.

When the populations of one same country are studied, the differences of temperament are remarked of which the language bears the traces. Here, they are calm and phlegmatic; diminutives are employed and terms are softened; there, temper is even: the speech is heard fit, exactly adapted to the matter. But farther off, there is the effect of the air, the sunshine, the drinking of wine, perhaps—hotter blood rushes through the veins; the expression is extravagant and "the brain is too near the cap;" the speech is studded with superlatives and the strongest form is used for the simplest meaning.

While the mode of speech varies with climate it also differs according to the dates. Compare current language with that of certain other historical periods of ours. Under the old Royalty, other talk was used than under the Revolution, and we do not speak like the men of 1830, 1848, or even the last Empire. Generally, language has a simpler shape now; we do not wear wigs, or put on lace cuffs to write letters in keeping; but one sign differ-

entiates us from our ancestors—our nervousness, the fount of our exaggerations.

On over-excited nerves, rather sick—heaven knows that to have nerves is no aristocratic privilege!—speech does not produce the same effect as on the normal man. And inversely, the nervous man cannot find the plain sentence sufficing when he tries to express his feelings. In ordinary life as in public, in literature as on the stage, calm and sober talk has given way to excessive balderdash. The means used by novelists and dramatists to galvanise the public and enforce attention, are found again in the rudimentary state in our ordinary chat, in the letter writing style, and particularly in polemics. Our processes of language are to those of a calm and methodical man what our hand-writing is to our fathers'. Steel pens are held to blame; would that were true!

"The geese may yet save the Republic"—with their quills! But the wrong is deeper, and abides in ourselves. We write like crackbrains and eccentrics; our ancestors ran their pens over smoother paper and held them firmly. Here we face one of the modern life results so mingled, which causes such a dreadful

consumption of energy. It leaves us winded, impatient and in perpetual tribulation. Like our tongue, our pen feels this and betrays us. From effect going back to the source, let us see and understand the warning it gives. What good can come forth from this habit of straining speech? Unfaithful interpreters of our own impressions, we can only falsify by exaggeration the minds of our neighbors as our own. Men who exaggerate cease to understand each other. The harvest of such lingual intemperance is irritation of character, violent and barren discussions, precipitate judgment deprived of all bounds, and the gravest excesses in education and social connections.

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May I be allowed in this appeal for plain speech to frame a vow which would have the happiest yield if accomplished? I pray for simple literature, not only as one of the best remedies for our worn-out spirits, driven too far, and fagged with eccentricities, but also as a pledge and fount of social union. I also desire simple art. Our arts and literature are reserved for the privileged by fortune and education.

Now, let me be clearly understood: I am not imploring painters, poets and romancers to step down from their heights to walk at half-way up the hill, and be complaisant with mediocrity—but quite the other way, to mount still more loftily! Popularity is what is common to us all and unites us; not what belongs to that class called so by tacit agreement. The sources of inspiration from which a simple art may spring are in the heart depths, and those eternal living realities before which all are alike. And the sources of popular language are to be sought in the scanty strong and simple forms expressing elementary feelings and the master-lines of human destiny. There dwell truth, might, grandeur and immortality. Might there not be such an ideal in this to enflame the youth who, feeling the sacred flame of the Beautiful burn within them, know what pity is, and to the scornful adage of "I hate the vulgar profane!" (Horace: *"Odi profanum vulgus!"*) prefer the otherwise human saying: *"Misereor super turbam!"*

On my side, I hold no artistic authority, but from the body of the people where I dwell I have the claim to utter my call towards those

receiving talent and say to them: "Do something for those ignored! Be understood by the humble." So will you do a work of pacification and enfranchisement; reopen fountains out of which drew the Old Masters whose canvases defy ages because they invested genius with simplicity.

CHAPTER V.

SIMPLE DUTY.

When children are spoken to on a subject worrying to them, they will point to the roof above or to a pigeon feeding its young, or down in the street to a driver ill-using his horse. Sometimes also, they will wickedly put to you one of those questions which rack the parental mind; all done to turn attention from the painful sight. I fear that we are but grown children when facing duty, and that when it is a personal matter, we seek many subterfuges to turn aside. The first shift is to ask if there be not a general duty in this, or if the word does not cover some of the numerous delusions of our foregoers. For, in short, duty supposes freedom of action, and that question carries us into metaphysical regions. How can you talk of duty when the

grave problem of free will is not solved? Theoretically, there is nothing to object. And were life a theory, and we were to elaborate a complete universal system, it would be absurd to bother about duty before having demonstrated freedom, its limits and conditions.

But life is not a theory. On this point of moral practice as on others, it has gone beyond theory, and there is no ground for belief that it will ever give up its place. This liberty—relative, I allow—like everything known to us, for that matter—this duty whose existence is questioned, is none the less at the base of all our judgment of self and others. We treat them up to a fixed point as responsible for our sayings and doings.

The firmest-set theorist, once off his hobby, makes no scruples about approving or disapproving his neighbors' acts, forging weapons against his enemies, appealing to generosity and fair play from those he wishes to dissuade from an unseemly step. The motion of moral obligation can no more be effaced than that of time or space, and in the same manner as we must resign ourself to walking onward before we know how to define the space to cross and the time our movements will take,

we must likewise submit to the moral obligation before having touched the deepest roots. Moral law dominates man, whether he respects it or infringes on it. Look at our daily life: everybody is ready to cast a stone at him who only does the plain task, though he might allege that he had not reached that philosophical certainty. Every man will say, with a thousand reasons for it: "A man is a man, to begin with; brave the task with your body first, and do your duty as a citizen, father of a family or son, and so on. Then, you may resume the strain of your meditation."

Still let us be clearly understood. We are not wishful to turn any aside from philosophical investigation or the scrupulous seeking for moral foundations. No thought leading men back into grave pondering can be useless or indifferent; we only forbid the thinker to wait for the finding of such foundation before he does a deed of humanity, honesty or dishonesty, bravery or cowardice. And foremost, we hold to framing a reply good to oppose all tricksters, never philosophers, and to oppose to ourselves when we invoke our philosophical doubt to justify our practical backsliding. For the very reason that one is a

man, before all positive or negative theory upon duty, the set rule is to bear yourself like a man. No eluding this point.

But the resources of the heart are mistaken badly if the effect of such a retort is reckoned upon. It may be without answer but it will not prevent other questions surging up. The amount of our shifts to avoid duty is equal to that of the sea sands or the stars in the sky.

Therefore we bulwark ourselves behind duty obscure, difficult and contradictory. I grant these words are apt to call up painful memories. What is harder than to be a dutiful man and yet doubt the right way, to grope in the gloom, to be bandied about between the contrary solicitations of different duties, or, farther more, to face the gigantic and crushing Duty beyond our force. Such things happen. We are not wishful to deny or dispute the tragedy in some occurrences and heart-rending in some lives. Nevertheless, it is seldom that duty has to cut its way to daylight through such a close mesh of circumstances which shock so as to eject sparks like lightning clouds. Such formidable shocks are exceptional. So much the better if

we stand firm when they do occur; but if it is not astonishing that trees are uprooted by the gale, that a nightmarcher stumbles on an unknown road, or that a soldier is vanquished when caught between two fires—then no one will doom without appeal those beaten in almost superhuman moral strife. Never has it been a shame to fall under odds and from obstacles.

So I tender my arms to those who entrench themselves behind the inexpugnable rampart of obscure, complicated and contradictory duty. At present I am not troubling about that, and am eager to talk solely of plain duty —I may also call it easy duty.

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Every year we hail three or four high days and holidays when the bells ring out merrily, and many a dull day. Similarly, there are a few great battles and many petty skirmishes to wage. Besides, there is an abundance of plain and evident duties to attend to. While in the heavy actions we bear ourselves meetly, in general, it is in the minor encounters that we see ourselves fail. Without fear of letting myself be drawn aside by a paradoxical turn of my thought, I declare: The main

thing is to fulfil simple duty, and exercise one's self in elementary justice. Usually those who lose their souls do so not because they fell below their hard task and could not accomplish what was impossible, but because they neglected their simple duty.

Let us illustrate this axiom by examples.

Whoever tries to penetrate the lower layers of society, is not slow to discover great mental and bodily misery. The more closely he looks, the more plainly he spies a great number of sores and, at length, the world of wretches appears a black mass before which the individual with his means of relief appears reduced to impotence. Truly he is goaded to run and help, but, at the same time, he asks: What is the good? Evidently, the case is of the most agonising sort. Some meet it by doing nothing out of despair. They are sterile, and yet they did not lack good will or pity. Such are wrong. Often a man may not help in the bulk, but that is no reason for his neglecting to help in a small way.

Many dispense with aiding because there is too much to do, in their eyes. These need to be reminded of their simple duty. It is thus in the present case: Let each one establish

connection with these outcasts according to his means, leisure and capacity. With a little willingness, some have managed to catch hold of the skirts of Government officers and mingle in the society of the Cabinet Ministers' families. Why should they not make up acquaintances among the poor folk and the workingmen in want? Once you know a few families, their story, antecedents and hardships, you can be extremely useful to them by merely doing your utmost and practising brotherly love under the form of moral and material succor. It is true you will have breached only a small corner, but you will have done your best, and, mayhap led someone else to do as much. Thus acting, instead of being merely able to bear witness that much vice, woe, disunion and gloomy hate exists in society, you will have injected a little good. And howsoever little the number of good deeds like yours may be, good will insensibly grow and evil lessen. But were your action to rest with what you did, you will have the testimony that you did the most sensible thing: the simple and even infantile duty offered you. In doing so, you will have discovered one of the secrets of the Good Life.

In its dreams human ambition embraces vastness, but rarely are we allowed to become great, and even so, sure and rapid success depends upon patient preparation. Fidelity in small things is at the foot of all accomplished greatness. We forget that too often. Yet if there is one truth necessary to know, there you have it, especially in hard times and in difficult passages. In event of wreck, one can save himself on a beam end or an oar or a splinter of plank. On the tumultuous breakers of life, when all seems battered to shreds, remember that any one of the bits may be your life-buoy. Demoralisation consists in despising the leavings.

You have been ruined, or a great sorrow has struck you, or yet under your eyes has wasted away the fruit of long labor. It is out of the question for you to restore that wealth, revive the dead or save your lost pains. Before the irreparable, you drop your arms. You neglect to care for yourself, to keep the house tidy, or watch the children. That is pardonable, and how clearly we understand it! But it is highly dangerous! Do not let the ill grow worse. In believing that you have no more to lose, you lose what still you possessed.

Gather up the fragments and take care of them with scrupulous care. And, soon, that will comfort you. Accomplishing the effort comes to our help as neglecting it turns against us. If there remains but one bough to cling to, cling to that; and though you seem to be the lonely man to defend an apparently lost cause, do not throw away your gun to join the runaways. The day after the Deluge, a few isolated survivors began to repeople the earth. The future may sometimes rest on one sole head, as it happens that life may hang by a hair. Inspirit yourself with history and nature; both will teach you by their toilsome evolutions that, like prosperity, calamity may ensue from the smallest cause, that it is not wise to neglect details and that, above all, one must know how to wait and start again.

In speaking of simple duty I did not forbear thinking of military life, and its examples afforded to the fighting-men in that great conflict known as Life. The soldier ill understood his duty if when his army was defeated, he shrank from brushing his clothes, furbishing his rifle, and attending to drill. You may say: "What's the use?" Use? Are there not

many ways of getting beaten? Is it no consequence to add discouragement, disorder and rout to the grief of a defeat? No! Never forget that the slightest act of energy in such trying times is like a torch in the dark—a token of life and hope. Every man, then, sees that all was not lost.

During the disastrous Retreat from Russia of the French in 1813-'14, in the depth of winter, when it was next to impossible to wear a decent front, a general presented himself one morning to Napoleon I., clean shaven and in dress parade uniform. On seeing him in full array, as careful as if going on review, the Emperor said to him:

"General, you are a fine soldier!"

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The simple duty is, therefore, the next to be done. A very common weakness often prevents many from deeming what is under the hand interesting; they see only the seamy side. Distance enchants them. So they uselessly expend a fabulous sum in willingness. They are impassioned about mankind, the public welfare, distant foreign calamities, and traverse life with their eyes fastened upon wonders captivating them from afar on the

horizon line, while they tread on their neighbors' toes or elbow them without noticing whom they pass.

It is a singular purblindness which prevents us seeing our neighbor! Many make extensive readings, or go many voyages, and yet do not know their fellow-citizens, lowly or great; they live thanks to the concurrency of a quantity of beings whose dwelling is indifferent to them. Never has their attention been attracted to those who teach them, instruct them, govern them, serve them, supply them, and maintain them. It never occurs to them that it is ingratitude or lack of foresight not to know their household or their employees, the few beings whose intimate relations are indispensable to us. Others go farther than this. For some wives the husband is a stranger, and the rule works both ways. There are parents who do not know their own sons. The children's development, thoughts, dangers incurred and hopes they nourish, are all a closed book. Many a child does not know his own parents, never suspecting they have any troubles, struggles or intentions to them unpenetrated. I am not alluding to unhappy families, those mournful circles, where all

the links are false, but of honorable groups composed of honest folk. Only, everybody is so engrossed in self. Everybody has his conceit, which takes all his time. I do not dispute that the distant duty is very attractive and it claims them wholly so that they have no consciousness of the duty at home. The proper base of operation is the field of immediate duty. Neglect that, and all you undertake afar is undermined. Therefore be of your home, your city, your works, your church, your study; while if you can, start from here to go away, but all taken in *your* simple and natural stride. Man must find many costly excuses to follow the backward route. In any event, the result of so strange a mixing up of duties is that many are meddling with a mass of business matters excepting the very one for which there was right to claim them. Everybody busies himself with other things than concern him, is absent from his post and ignores his trade. This is what trammels life. Yet it would be so simple if each would mind his own business.

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Mark another form of simple duty.

When damage has been done, who ought to

repair it? The injurer. This is right, but it is but theory. And the consequence would be that the injury would have to be left unmended until the malefactors were found and forced to restore. But if they could not be found? or if they could not or would not make amends?

A hole in the roof lets in rain, or a broken windowpane lets in the draft. Do you wait till you have had the breaker of the glass or the trampler on the roof arrested to call in the roofer or the glazier? You think this is nonsensical, do you not? Yet it is the usual custom. The boys will shout out with indignation: "I did not throw that mud—why should I clear it off?" And most reasonable mortals echo them. It is logic. But not the sort which keeps the globe revolving.

On the other hand, it must be known, as life repeats it to you all the time, that the damage done by some is made good by others. Some destroy and others rebuild; some fling dirt and others clean up; some shed tears and others dry them; some live for iniquity and others die for justice. It is in the carrying out of this sad law that lies safety. This also is

logic, but of that logic of facts which makes the other sort turn pale.

The conclusion to draw is not dubious. The simplehearted draw it thus: Being given the hurt, the main thing is to heal it and set the injured afoot again: all the better if the wrongdoers kindly contribute to the repairs; but experience advises us not to rely too much on their concurrence.

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But be duty however simple, there must be power to enforce it. In what does that consist and where is it to be found? One may soon be weary of clamoring for it. Duty is an enemy for man, and an annoyance so long as it does not come as an external solicitation. When it comes in by the door, man flies out of the window, and if the windows are stopped up, he would climb up the chimney and escape over the roofs. The more clearly it is seen coming the more surely one eludes it. It is like the police officer, representing public strength and official justice, so conspicuous that an adroit thief always manages to evade him. Alas! even though the constable did grasp him by the collar he would be more likely to take him to jail than set him back

on the right road. To enable man to accomplish his duty, he must fall into other hands than of the constable, who says: "You must do so and so, or not do this or that! or else, look out for yourself!"

This other body is Liking.

When a man hates his trade or works at it carelessly, all worldly powers are unable to make him tackle it with heartiness. But the man fond of his work needs no spur; not only is it vain to constrain him, but it is impossible to divert him. It is the same for all. The great thing is to have felt what is holy and immortally lovely in our darksome destiny; to have been determined by a series of experiences to love this life for its pains and its hopes; to love mankind for its misery and its nobility; and to belong to mankind by heart, body and intelligence. Then will an unknown force sway us, as the wind swells the ship's sails and we shall be wafted away unto pity and justice. And yielding to that irresistible impulsion, we would say: "It was stronger than I and I could not do otherwise!"

In thus expressing themselves, men of all ages and all classes designate a power mightier than men but which may yet lodge in the

human breast. And all that is truly lofty in us appears like a manifestation of that mystery beyond our sense. Great feelings are like great thoughts and deeds, things of inspiration. The tree flourishes and yields its fruit because it drank the vital forces in the soil and received light and heat from the sun. If a man in his lowly sphere, amid ignorance and inevitable faults, sincerely devotes himself to his work, he comes in touch with the everlasting fount of goodness. This central force is manifested under a thousand shapes. Sometimes, it is indomitable energy, caressing affection, the militant spirit attacking and destroying evil, maternal solicitude picking up some crumpled and discarded life on the wayside or the humble patience of long searching; but all that it touches bears its signature. Men whom this animates, feel that we live and are emanated through it. To serve it is their happiness and their meed. It is enough to be its instruments, and they do not look sharply for the lustre of their function, well knowing that nothing is great and nothing small, but that our deeds and our life will be valued purely by the spirit which filled them.

CHAPTER VI.

SIMPLE WANTS.

When a bird is bought at the fanciers' shop, the good man tells you briefly how your new boarder must be treated, and all about it; health, food and the rest are confined in a few words. In the same way, to sum up the essential wants of most beings, summary hints suffice. Their regimen is generally of extreme simplicity and so long as they follow it they keep well, like children obedient to mother nature. When they stray off, complications ensue, the health alters and the sprightliness flies. Nothing but the simple natural life will keep an organism in perfect vigor. From our not remembering this elementary principle, we fall into odd aberrations.

What must a man have to live materially under the best possible conditions? Sound food, plain clothes, healthy dwelling, air and

exercise. I am not going to enter into the minutiæ of hygiene, or compose bills of fare or indicate model houses or clothes cutting. My aim is to mark a direction and tell the advantage in everybody ordering life in a spirit of simplicity. To be assured that this spirit does not reign widely enough in our society just look at men of all classes. Put to different members of distinct circles the question: "What is your need to live well?" and you will see what will be the answer. There is nothing so instructive as that.

For the born denizens of the Parisian asphalte there is no possible life outside a region mapped out by some boulevards; there is the right air, the proper light, the normal temperature, the classical cookery, and many other items to order, without which it would not be worth while to promenade this round world.

On the different rounds of the social ladder, the question of living is answered by a figure, varying according to the scale of ambition or education—by which is most often understood the external habits, the lodging, the dress and the dinner—education purely superficial. Living is obtainable at a fixed

revenue; below that, do not talk of living! There are suicides because these descended below a minimum. They preferred to step out rather than retrench. Note that this minimum, making them despair, would have been snapped at by others with less exacting requirements, and enviable to still more modest tastes.

In mountainous lands, the *flora* changes with the height. There is the region of ordinary tillage, the woodland, the meadows, the bare rocks and the glaciers. Above a zone, the wheat will not grow but the vine thrives; the oak disappears as it gets lower, while the pine flourishes at considerable height. Human life, with its needs, reminds one of these needs of the vegetation.

At a fixed level of fortune, the financier can keep alive, with the club-men, the fashionables and all those whose strict wants comprise servants and equipages as well as summer and seaside houses. Elsewhere, the wealthy retired tradesman expands with his own manners and gait. In other regions, dwells independence easy, medium and modest, and the category of wants is unequal. Lower come the lower classes, artisans, clerks, workmen,

and the farmers, the masses, in short, who live serried and packed like fine grass on the mountain top, where the great vegetation would wilt and thin out.

On all these different levels, they live, and all are men under the same head. It seems odd that there should be such a prodigious difference of wants. Here the analogies of our comparison leave us. Plants and animals of the same families have the same wants. Human life brings us to contrary conclusions. What can be inferred but that there is considerable elasticity in the nature and the number of our wants?

Is it useful or favorable to the development of the individual and his happiness or those of society, that man should have a multitude of wants and apply himself to satisfying them? To begin with, let us resume our comparison with inferior beings. They live contented provided that their chief wants are satisfied. Is it thus in human society? No. At all degrees, we meet with discontent. I completely except those who lack necessities; without injustice, we could not class the merely discontented with those from whom cold, hunger and misery wring wailing. I

do not wish to deal with others than the men who, after all, live under conditions supportable. Whence arises their discontent? Why should we meet it not only among persons of moderate but satisfactory condition, but still, under more or less refined shades, in opulence and at the summit of social situations? "Gorged leeches" are spoken of, meaning satiated rich men. Who speaks so of them? Those who judging from the outside, think that from the time they have been feasting they ought to have enough. But do *they* rate that they have had enough? Not in the least. If there are contented rich, it is not because they are rich but from their knowing when to leave off. A wild beast gorged after eating, lies down and sleeps it off. A man may rest and doze for a time but not forever; he gets habituated to the comfort but will weary of it and cry out for greater luxury. Appetite in man is not allayed by food, but comes as he eats. This may appear absurd but it is the pure truth.

The fact that those who grumble most are the very ones who have most reason to declare they are satisfied, proves that happiness is not linked to the number of our wants and

to the eagerness with which we foster them. Everybody is interested in taking in this truth. If not, and he does not limit the exigencies by an act of energy, he risks being insensibly drawn over the steep of desire.

This is an easy slope and the man slips upon it who lives merely to eat and drink, sleep, lounge, dress, and give himself all he longs for; it matters not whether he is the parasite basking in the sun; the drinking workman, the merchant making his belly his god, the woman absorbed about her costume, the high-liver of any clique, though he be simply the vulgar epicurean—the good fellow, too docile about bodily needs. Those who slide down this slope obey the same laws as drive a rolling body down an inclined plane. A prey to an illusion incessantly renewing, they say to themselves: "A few steps yet, the last ones, towards the object which allures our greed below! Then we will rein in!" But the acquired impetus forces them on; the farther it whirls them, the less they resist.

Here lies the secret of many of our contemporaries' fury and agitation. Having condemned their will to be slave of their appetites, they perceive the punishment for their

weakness. They are given over to wild desires, implacable ones which raven on their flesh, bruise their bones, drink their blood, and are never assuaged. I am not uttering here any transcendental moral; but letting life speak, while making notes with which the public crossways echo.

Though the new beverages show how inventive is drunkenness, has it found any means to quench thirst? No; for they may call it the art of cherishing thirst and making it inextinguishable. Has free living blunted the spur of the senses? No; it whets it, and converts morbid longing into a fixed craving. Let your wants rule and nourish them, and you will see them multiply like insects in the sunshine. The more you give, the more they will ask. The man is mad who seeks for happiness in good living. As well try to fill the bored tuns of the Danaides. Those who boast millions, still lust for billions, as those who have thousands yearn for millions. Others sigh for a gold piece or for silver, as others yet for coppers. When a man has the proverbial fowl in the pot, he wishes it were a goose in the oven, and had he that he would cry for turkey, and so forth.

Never shall we know how far the tendency is. Too many lowly bodies ape the grandees, too many workingmen imitate their employers, too many shop girls vie with "young ladies," too many clerks pretend to be club-men or sporting "swells," too many forget that what they own might serve a better purpose than buying all sorts of enjoyment merely to find that they never had enough then. Our wants, which ought to have remained our servants, have become a turbulent crowd, a legion of petty tyrants without discipline. The slave to his wants is like the bear led by a ring in his nose and compelled to dance against his will. The simile is not flattering, but you must own that it is true. It is by their wants that so many are dragged along while frenziedly roaring about liberty and progress, and I don't know what. They cannot take a step without asking if it is agreeable to their masters. How many men and women have gone to the verge of honesty because they followed their wants, being in such number, for they could not resign themselves to living plainly. In the madhouses are many lodgers who might discourse at length upon the danger of too exacting wants.

Let us relate the tale of an honest fellow known to us. He was tenderly fond of his wife and family, and lived pretty easily on his labor, but it was far from satisfying the luxurious wants of his helpmate. Always short of money though he might have lived so smoothly with a little simplicity, he finally had to go away to a far-off country where he earned "big money," leaving his brood at home. I do not know what he was thinking about out there, but they had finer rooms, handsomer dresses and something like a set-up carriage and horses. For the time being, their content was extreme. But they were soon inured to this semblance of luxury. In a short time the fine lady found her establishment shabby and the equipage poor. If that man loved his wife, as I do not doubt he did, he would have emigrated to the moon to win higher salary.

In other cases the parts are inverted; the wife and children are sacrificed to the voracious wants of the bread-winner, whose irregular life, gambling and other costly follies made him forget his duties. Between his desires and paternity, he settled for the former and slowly slid into the vilest egotism.

This oblivion of all dignity, and progressive benumbing of noble feelings are not solely remarked in revellers of the easy classes. The workingman is also stricken. I know many little households where the poor mother has nothing but pain and sorrow day and night, the children, shoeless, are often wanting bread. Why? Because father requires too much money. Only to allude to the outlay for spirits, it is well known to what proportions "the Drink Bill" has expanded in twenty years. The amount swallowed up in this gulf is fabulous: twice the ransom of the Franco-Prussian War. How many proper wants could have been satisfied with what was thrown out to the swinish wants? The rule of wants is not steady—quite the other thing! The more a man wants for himself the less he has to do anything for his neighbor, even for those attached to him by family ties.

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Lessening of happiness, independence, moral delicacy and sound sentiments, such are, indeed, the outcome of Want being one's Master. Add a host of other inconveniences of which the least are not the waning of fortune and the public health. Society with too many

wants is drying up and to them sacrifice not only the conquests of the past but the possibilities of the immolated future. "After us, the Deluge!" To hack down the forests to raise a little cash, to eat premature vegetables, to destroy in a day the fruits of a long labor, to burn the furniture to warm the hands just for the moment's comfort—to live on expedients, to charge the future with debts that the passing hour should be pleasant, and to sow for the morrow hardships, sorrows, ailments, ruin, envy and spite—never would one come to an end in enumerating the misdeeds of this sinister behavior.

Contrariwise, if we confine ourselves to simple wants, we avoid all these torments and replace them by a multitude of advantages. It is an old story that sobriety and temperance are the best keepers of the health. Those observing them are spared many chagrins saddening existence; they ensure health and a liking for action and intellectual balance. If it be a question of food, clothing and dwelling, simplicity in tastes is moreover a source of independence and security. The more plain your living, the more you safeguard your future; being less at the mercy

of surprises and counter-chances. Sickness or cessation of employment does not throw you out upon the street. Even a notable change in your situation does not wholly unhorse you. Having simple wants it is less painful for you to fit in with the changes of fortune. Even should you lose your berth or your income, you remain a man, from the foundation on which rests your life not being your money, table, wine-cellar, stable or furniture. You will not have to carry yourself in adversity like a suckling losing its rattle or its bottle. Stronger, better prepared for the struggle as you will be like the warriors with short hair offering no hold—you will, besides, he more useful still to your neighbor. You will not excite his jealousy, or his lower appetites, or his reprobation for the show of your tinsel and the iniquity of your expenses, and the spectacle of a parasitical existence. Less demanding for your own welfare, you will have kept the means to work like others.

CHAPTER VII.

SIMPLE PLEASURES.

Do you think we are having amusing times? As far as I can say, I think them rather dull, taken all together. And I fear my impression is not exclusive. On seeing how those around me are entertained and hearing them talk, I feel unfortunately confirmed in the idea that they are not much rejoiced. It is not for the fault of trying hard, but it must be owned up that they succeed but mildly. What can this depend upon?

Some accuse business or politics; some social questions or militarism. There is plenty of choice when we begin to tell the beads of our heavy cares. How can you expect to find any fun? Your soup is too hotly peppered for you to sup it with relish. We all have our arms full of stupid toys, any one of which would scare away good humor. Wherever we

go from morn to night, we meet men in a hurry, absent-minded and harrowed. They have left all their merriment in the wicked scuffles of snarling politics; hearts sick of vile doings and the jealousy they met in art or letters. Business competition also much disturbs sleep; the course of too many studies and the lines too crowded spoil life for the young; the workingmen suffer the consequences of truceless jarring. It is becoming disagreeable to govern because there is no glory in it; to teach where respect is faded; subjects of discontent are everywhere the eye is cast.

And yet history represents some tormented periods lacking idyllic tranquillity as much as ours, though their gravest events did not prevent men enjoying themselves. It even seems that serious crises, insecurity about the next day, and the violence of social commotions become source of fresh vitality. It is not rare to hear soldiers sing between two battles, and I believe I am not wrong in saying that gladness has celebrated its finest triumphs in the hardest times amid obstacles. But there were motives for interior order, perchance lacking us to-day, to enable them to sleep peaceably before actions or to sing away

trouble. Gladness is in us, not in the things around. And I persist in believing that the causes of our ill-humor and present ill-ease contagiously enwrapping us, reside in us as much as in outer circumstances. For hearty amusement one wants to feel a solid footing beneath, believe in life and possess it. Just what is wanting to us! Many men—and alas! young ones, too,—are at odds with life, and I am not speaking of philosophers solely. How can you expect any sporting when there is the worry that, after all, it would have been better if nothing ever existed? Moreover, we observe, in the vital forces current, a disquieting depression, attributable to the abuse man has made of sensations. Too many excesses of all sorts have falsified our senses and injured our faculty to be happy. Nature succumbs under the eccentricities she has been afflicted with. Profoundly hurt at the root, the willingness to live, spite of all persistent, seeks to be satisfied with sops. The medical domain has been called upon for artificial breathing and feeding, and galvanism. Around expiring pleasure we see a host eager to reanimate and awaken her. The most ingenious methods have been invented; it can-

not be said that the expense was chaffered with. All has been attempted even to the impossible.

But all the alembics have not managed to distil one pure drop of delight. Do not confuse pleasure and its instruments. Is it enough to grasp a brush to be a painter or to buy a Stradivarius at great expense to become a violinist? After the same, you may get the most perfected and ingenious amusement-machine, but you will be no forwarder. Yet, with a lump of charcoal, a great artist will draw you an immortal sketch. To paint requires talent or genius, and to be amused you must be happy. Possessing that, you can be cheaply amused. This faculty is destroyed in man by scepticism, abuses and forced life; it is maintained by confidence, moderation, and the normal habits of thought and activity.

An excellent proof of what I allege and easy to bear in mind, is found in the fact that everywhere, in simple wholesome life, genuine pleasure accompanies it, as sweet scent goes with natural bloom. This life may be thorny, fettered, deprived of what we commonly deem conditions of pleasure, but the rare and delicate plant, Joy, succeeds there.

It will spring up between two paving-stones, in a wall crevice, or in a rocky crack. It is a marvel how and whence it came there. But it does well, while you might cultivate it at an outlay of its weight of gold in hot houses or in soil enriched, only to see it pine and die between your fingers.

Ask actors what kind of an audience finds the most fun in comedy, and the reply is that it is the gross public. The reason is not hard to seize. For this sort the comedy is an exception and they have not been saturated with witty matter till they can absorb no more. And again, it is rest from their rough fatigue. This relished pleasure has been honestly won and the worth of it is known just as of the pence earned by the sweat of the brow. And, farthermore, these spectators have not been in the side-scenes, to mingle with the actors' intrigues, and unaware of the wire-pulling, imagine it all really happened. From all these motives it enjoys a pleasure unalloyed. I can now see the used-up sceptic with his one-eye-glass glitter, in his box, as he casts upon the amused pit a disdainful glance: "Poor clods, idiots, rustic and ignorant rabble!" And yet these are the truly liv-

ing, while he is an artificial creature—a puppet, incapable of feeling that fine and salutary intoxication of an hour's frank mirth.

Unfortunately, simplicity is fading away, even in the people's quarter. We see that they, and the country folk to boot, break with olden traditions. The brain perverted by alcohol, the rage for gambling, and proneness to unhealthy fiction, gradually contracts sickly tastes. False living makes an irruption into centres erstwhile simple, and, suddenly, there is rot as when the phylloxera appears in the vines. The robust tree of rustic jollity dries up in the sap and the leaves turn yellow. Compare the old style rural feast with the modernised village fairs. In their hallowed attire, the burly country clowns sang the local songs, danced the country dances in peasant dress, drank home-made beverages and seemed completely at home. They amused themselves as naturally as the blacksmith knocks off horse-shoes, or the waterfall leaps or the colts frisk in the meadow. It was catching and cheered the heart. In spite of one's self, one cried out: "Go it, lads! this is the right sort of fun!" One begged to be let join in the sports.

But now you see the plowmen disguised as "cheap" citizens—city dandies—country girls uglified by the rural dressmaker and, as ornaments to the merrymaking, a group of degenerates bawling variety-theatre songs; and, sometimes, at the stand of honor some strolling players hired to make the louts more coarse and introduce them to "refined" pleasures. Instead of mead or cider, liquors with a base of potato spirit or absinthe. In all neither originality nor picturesqueness. Free-and-easiness granted, and vulgarity, but not the giving one's self up to gaiety which plain pleasure induces.

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This question of pleasure is capital. Men of substantial position generally neglect it as futility; utilitarians regard it as a costly extra. Men called pleasure-seekers forage on such delicate ground like pigs in a garden, appearing never to suspect the immense interest our species attaches to recreation. Joy is a holy fire to be kept burning, for it throws on life a brilliant glow. Whoever feeds it carries on work as profitable to our kind as the bridge-builder, tunnel-borer, or tiller of the soil. In the noblest term, this is a work of

union when conducted so as to maintain the faculty, amid labor and pains of life, of being merry; and, like beneficial inoculation, it ought to be propagated among one's fellows. What a truly divine mission for our poor selves to lend one a little to being jolly, to smooth wrinkled brows, and throw a light into the darkened corners! But this mission can only be fulfilled with great simplicity of heart.

We are not simple enough to be happy and make others so.

Kindness and self-detachment are wanting. We distribute cheer as we do consolation, by such proceedings as to gain negative results. How do we comfort? We deny the ail, discuss it, and try to persuade the sufferer that he mistakes in thinking he is in trouble. In short, our language, in plain words, would run: "You talk of being in pain, friend; that's odd, and you must be wrong, for *I* feel no pain! nothing." The only human means of soothing suffering is to heartily share it, and so what must a poor soul feel when comforted after *that* mode?

To cheer up our neighbor and make the time pass pleasantly, we behave in the same

fashion; we coax him into admiring our wit, laugh at our quips, frequently call at our house to be seated at our board, where blazes our care to make a show. Sometimes, in addition, with liberal patronising, we do him the charity of amusement of our choice. This is provided we did not ask him over to our place as if we were inviting him to a game of cards, with the under-thought to parade him at our expense. Do you think that true pleasure-making for others lies in getting ourselves admired, having our better luck confessed, or using a friend as a catspaw? Is there any such a bore as to find you are being made a plaything of, a pet and a member of a coterie? To delight others, and have it ourselves, begin by exiling the miserable *Me* and keep it banished during all the entertainment. It is the worst of spoil-sports. Be a good fellow, lovable, kindly, drop your buttons, decorations, honorary degrees, titles and all that frippery, and heartily place yourself at others' beck and call.

Let us make merry sometimes, if only for an hour, and set the company laughing while everything else is switched off. The sacrifice is only apparent as none get so much fun

as those who know how to give themselves up simply in order to procure the party a little forgetfulness and hilarity.

When are we going to be plain men enough not to thrust into the first row of our meetings for enjoyment all those same things which set our teeth on edge in everyday life? Can we not for an hour sink our pretension, divisions, classifications, and our personalities, in brief, to be boys again and laugh right out with the broad mellow roar that does so much good and makes us better men?

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I am pressed to make a remark most pat, and offer my well-disposed readers a chance of uniting in a magnificent deed. My aim is to recommend to attention the bodies rather cold-shouldered as regards pleasure-making.

It is thought that a broom is solely for sweeping, a watering-can for sprinkling, and a coffee-mill for grinding coffee alone; in the same way as a hospital-nurse must be always attending the ailing, a school-teacher instructing, a lawyer laying down the law, a soldier standing on guard. The conclusion is that persons engaged in earnest toil are doomed to it, as the ox to the yoke. Diversion is incom-

patible with such bounden employees. Carrying this idea farther, it is believed authorised to think that infirm, ruined and afflicted mortals, the beaten in the battle of life, and having heavy burdens to bear, are on the shady side like the dwellers on the mountain's north, and that it is right they should be so. Hence the rather general conclusion that earnest men need no holidays and that it is inconsiderate to propose them. As for the afflicted, it would be impolite to break the thread of their sad thoughts. It seems, therefore, admitted that some are condemned to remain always austere, to be approached with the same mien and spoken to but on solemn subjects. Likewise, smiles must be left at the door when visiting the unwell and misfortunate, to assume a glum front, lamentable bearing and heart-rending topics of conversation. Thus black is brought to the mourning, and shadows to deepen the shades. All contribute to augment the solitary's isolation and the monotony of dullards. Some existences are walled up as if in a dungeon; because grass has sprung up around their deserted hermitages, we whisper low on going near as up to tombs. Who suspects the infernally cruel work ac-

complished every day in our world? This must not be!

When you see men and women devoted to severe tasks and such painful offices as frequenting places of misery to bind up wounds, mind that they are made of your dust, too, having the same wants and requiring the same hour for idle pastime and forgetfulness. You will not turn them from their errand by making them sometimes laugh, though they see so many tears and pangs. Quite otherwise, for you will restore them the power to continue their labors.

And when you make the acquaintance of families tried, and persons afflicted, do not draw a dead-line around them like the plague-stricken, not to be crossed unless by taking such precautions as remind them of their sad fate. Nay, after having shown all your sympathy, and respect for their sorrow, relieve them, soothe, aid them to live, bring them some of the outer perfume—something, in short, telling them that their woe has not excluded them from the rest.

Extend your sympathy as well to those in absorbing occupations as if riveted to the one place. The world is full of sacrificed beings

with never repose or vacations or sports—to them the most modest respite does immense good. A trifle of relief so easy to procure them—if you would only think of it. But there! the broom is made for sweeping and it can feel no weariness. This guilty blindness must be shaken off, preventing us seeing the lassitude of those always "men in the gap." Relieve those outposts of duty—let old Sisyphus have a breathing-spell. Let us take momentarily the place of the mother, a slave through household and family cares—let us give a little of our sleeping time to those worn out by vigils at the sick bedside. The young lady of the house may not be always cheered by her walk abroad; so take the cook's apron off and make her don it and go on with her work while the cook has a turn in the open air. You will make them both the livelier for the change and you will be the same. We are all the time keeping step with somebody carrying a parcel which we might take upon ourselves for a space. This short change would amply cure the chafing, rekindle the joy extinct in many a bosom and open a broad highway for good will among men. How much better we would be understood among our-

selves if we heartily took another's place a while and how much more pleasure there would be a-living!

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I have elsewhere dwelt too long upon the organisation of pleasure-making among youth to recur to it fully.* But I should like to substantially say what cannot be too often said: If you wish youth to stay moral, do not neglect its play-time, leaving chance the care to fill it for us. You may reply that youth does not like its distractions regulated and that, anyway, the present-day youngsters are spoilt and already lose too much time at them. Firstly, I reply that ideas may be hinted, directions indicated, and occasions for games created without any regulation. Secondly, I should like to have it noted that it is an error to imagine that youth is too lark-like. To-day there is very little left aside from factitious sports, enervating and fleeting, which blight life instead of making it flourish and blossom. Excess, that foe of legitimate use, has so broadly bespattered this earth that it is hard

*See "Youth" (*La Jeunesse*), by this author, chapter on "Joy."

to touch anything it has not soiled. Hence prudence, and forbidding and prohibitions without number. One can hardly stir if one wants to avoid all that resembles unhallowed revels. In properly behaved youths, the self-respecting, lack of amusement causes deep repining. Not without inconvenience have the tasters been weaned away from that generous wine. Such a state cannot be prolonged without thickening the cloud upon the boyish heads. We must haste to their succor. Our children are heirs to an age not lively. We are bequeathing them great cares, embarrassing questions, and a life laden with cramps and complications. Anyhow, let us make an attempt to clear the dawn of their days. Organise sports, build covered playgrounds, and open our houses and hearts! Let us push the whole family into the merry-go-round! Let not gaiety be an object of export. Gather our sons from out of the morose houses whence they are driven upon the street, and our daughters out of the dulness of loneliness. Multiply the family feasts, parties and family excursions; let us raise jollity into an institution. Let the school take part in this. Professors and monitors, teachers and pupils—

meet oftener and have more common play!

This will speed the serious tasks. Nothing will get the chief more fully understood than our having laughed with him together, and, reciprocally, to understand the boys, they should be "chummed" with elsewhere than on the benches and at the desks.

"But who will find the money?"

What a question! It points to the central error. Pleasure and money; two wings of the same bird? Alas! it is a coarse illusion! Like all things truly precious in this world, pleasure cannot be bought or sold. To be amused the payment must be with the person —that is the rub! This does not forbid you opening your purse, if you like and deem it useful. But I assure you it is not indispensable. Pleasure and simplicity are two old mates. Make up your parties simply and just gather together. First, have worked thoroughly; then be amiable and as frank as possible towards your playmates and do not speak ill of the absent; success will be certain.

CHAPTER VIII.

SIMPLICITY AND VENALITY.

We have touched elbows in brushing by a widely-spread prejudice attributing to money magical power. Skirting burning ground, we shall not shun it: we are going to set foot upon it, persuaded that some truths may well be spoken on it. They are not new but next to it as they are so thoroughly forgot!

I see no means of doing without money. Some theoricians or legislators accuse it of all our evils, and yet all they have done so far is change it in name or shape. But they have never been able to pass over a representative token of commercial value. To suppress money is tantamount to suppressing writing. But it is not the less sound that the money question is vexing. It forms one of the principal points in our thorny life. The economical difficulties we battle with, social conventions, and all the ordering of modern movements

have raised money to so eminent a rank that it is no wise astonishing that imagination attributes to it a kind of royalty. It is from that side that we approach the problem.

The term Money is counterpart with merchandise: without goods to deal in, no money. As long as there are goods to handle, there will be money in some shape. The source of all the abuses of which money is the centre resides in confusion. Merchandise and things without any connection thereto, have been bundled together. A venal value has been fixed upon things which have none and ought never to have any. Notions about sale and buying have overrun the country where they might be properly regarded as aliens, enemies and usurpers. It is right that corn, potatoes, wine, cider, and woven goods should be sold and bought. It is perfectly natural that a man's labor should win him claims on life and that in his hand should be placed a token of those claims. But here the analogy ceases to be complete. Man's work is not a piece of goods like a bag of corn or a sack of charcoal. Elements enter into human products not to be set down in dollars and cents. Lastly, there are unbuyable things: sleep for example, fore-

thought and talent. Anyone offering these for sale may be set down as a mad man or a swindler. Still, men make money out of these things. They sell what does not belong to them, and their dupe pays in solid cash for illusionary values. In the same way, there are dealers in merrymaking, love, miracles, patriotism and what not?—and this title of merchant, so honorable in representing the man vending substantial goods, becomes the blackest brand when tacked on matters of the heart, the soul and the country.

Nearly everybody agrees to term shameful the trafficker in his feelings, honor, distinctive garb, his pen or his authority. The theory, as stated, resembles a platitude closer than a high moral truth; and he who meets no contradiction to his upholding it in theory, has infinite difficulty in entering into the practice of it. For trafficking is all over the world. The money changers are installed in the Temple sanctuary, by which I mean not merely the religious storehouse, but where humanity stores all that is holy and inviolable. It is not money that enmeshes life, corrupts it and vitiates it, but our mercenary spirit.

This prompts the single question: "What do I make by it?" or is summed up in a saying: "Money buys everything." With these watchwords society can descend to a stage of infamy impossible to describe or imagine.

"How much do I make by it?"

This inquiry, so fair while connected with precautions to be taken to assure subsistence by labor, becomes shocking when beyond its limits and overruling all life. This is so true that it befouls even daily bread labor. I furnish paid-for labor—nothing's better; but nothing's worse if my inspiration during that work was the mere desire to touch the pay. A man who has no motive for action but his wage, does bad work. He is not interested in his work but in the money for it. If he can "scamp on his job" without shaving off his price, be sure he will! Mason, laborer or factory hand, the man not fond of his work puts no dignity or gusto in it, and he is, in fact, a bad workman. The physician who thinks of nothing but his fees, is not one to whom a life should be trusted, for what brings him to your bed is the desire to fill his purse out of your own. If it be to his gain to keep you longer in suffering, he is capable of nursing

your ill instead of fortifying your health. The professor who has no passion for instructing the young is a scurvy one, for the returns are meager, but his instruction will be thinner yet. What is the mercenary newspaper man worth? The day when you write to get the penny a line, that day your writing will not be worth the penny. The nearer human work touches upon an elevated nature, the more the mercenary spirit, if it intervenes, sterilises it and spoils. It is a thousand times right to say that the laborer is worthy of his hire; and that all who strive to keep the globe a-moving ought to have a place to rest in the sunshine, for whoever does not do anything useful—does not gain his livelihood, in short—he is but a parasite.

But there is not a graver error socially than to make gain the sole motive. What nobody can pay for is that best work put in, made by force of arm, heat of the heart, and tension of the intelligence. Nothing better than this fact proves that man is not a machine; two men with the same force and movements do not produce the like work. Wherein is the cause of this phenomenon? In their intentions diverging. One has the simple—the

other the mercenary soul. Both take their pay, but the one worked without fruit while the other's contains his spirit. The first work is like the sand atom lying where it will send forth nothing, the other like the grain thrown on the earth, where it will germinate and produce a harvest. There is another way to explain the secret that many have not succeeded, though employing the same outward methods as the others. Automatons do not reproduce, and the mercenary work has no fruit.

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We are indubitably obliged to bow before the economical fact and acknowledge the difficulties; from day to day it is becoming more urgent to combine one's means of action well to manage in feeding, clothing, housing and rearing a family. The man not keeping track of imperious necessities, not calculating and foreseeing, is a fanatic or a blunderer, sooner or later doomed to hold out his hand to those whose parsimony he scoffed at. And yet what would become of us if we let this kind of care absorb us entirely? If, perfectly solvable, we tried to mete out our effort to the amount of return; if we did nothing that did not bear a full receipt; if we considered as useless, or

lost, such pains as cannot be set down in columns in a bill?

Did our mothers get their pay regularly for caring for us and bringing us up? What becomes of our filial affection if we wanted cash for loving and cherishing our old parents?

What does it pay in cash for telling the truth? unpleasant thing—sometimes suffering and persecution. For defending the country? exhaustion, wounds, and often death. For doing good? Troubles, ingratitude, and even grudges. Into devotedness enters all the essential functions of mankind. I defy the finest calculators to hold their own in this world without appealing to something else than calculation. Of course, they are esteemed clever who have "made their pile." But look sharply at them. In their pile is there not some wool owed to the devotedness of the simple? Would they have piled up if they had been competed with by other such wool-gatherers with the device: "Pay the piper or no music!" Let us say it boldly: It is due to those who did not look too closely to getting their money's worth that the world moves on. The handsomest services and the

hardest work—generally, they were the least paid or went unpaid. It is a blessing that there always have been men ready for honorary offices—and even such as are paid in suffering—and cost money, rest and the very life. Their part is oftentimes painful and not without disheartenment. Who of us has not heard accounts of doleful experiences in which the narrator regretted his past kindnesses, and how he took such pains to gather but sour grapes. Usually such confessions end with: "I was a fool to do so and so!" Sometimes they were right to judge it so, because it is always wrong to cast pearls before swine; yet how many lives there are whereof the sole brilliant acts are precisely those repented because of man's ingratitude! We must wish for humanity that the number of such foolish deeds should increase.

I have now reached the *Credo* ("I believe!") of the mercenary mind. Its quality is brevity. For it the law and the Prophets are contained in the one maxim: "Money buys everything!" Superficially regarding society, nothing is more evident. "Sinews of war," "convincing argument," "Key opening all doors," "King of the world." Collecting all the sayings upon

money's power and lustre, one could make a litany longer than any to all the saints. To form an idea of what the penniless lack, one must try to live a day in society in that state. I beg those fond of contrasts and unforeseen dilemmas, to try to live moneyless for half a week only, afar from their friends and acquaintances to whom one is still a somebody. They will undergo more ordeals in twenty-four hours than a settled man in a whole year. Alas! some have to go through this in spite of their wish, and when real ruin bursts over their head, and they try to stay at home, among their childhood's companions and even such as are under obligations to them, these affect not to know them. With what bitterness do they comment on that "Belief": "Money buys everything!" without it, nothing can be had! You are become the pariah —the leper whom all shun. As flies flock upon dead bodies, so men swarm upon money. Take it away and the void appears. How many tears that mercenary Creed has caused! bitter and bloody ones from those who had perhaps been once worshippers of the golden calf!

And yet this creed is false—totally false.

I am not going to march to the attack with the old weapons, such as the rich man astray in the desert who cannot buy a drop of water with his gold; or yet the decrepit millionaire who would give half his ownings to buy of a hearty poor man his twenty years and robust health! I shall no more seek to prove to you that money cannot buy happiness. Many who have money and many with none would laugh at truths so well-worn and stereotyped. But I refer to the memories and experiences of anyone to pierce with his finger this gross lie, glossing over an axiom everywhere repeated.

Line your pocketbook as full as you can, and come along with me into a watering-place, of which there are many. I mean the mineral springs once unknown, when full of simple, respectful, welcoming folk, where you could get good board without great outlay. Fame with her hundred trumpets drew it out of the shade, and told them what profit they might extract from their site, clime and persons. On Dame Fame's puffs, you set out thither, flatter yourself that with your money you are bound to find a peaceful retreating-place, and far from this factitious

and civilised centre, weave a little poetry into your daily web. The first sight is good: the natural frame and patriarchal customs, slow in disappearing, strike you favorably at first blush. But as the days trail by, the impression wanes and the rough side comes up. What you regarded as the authentic old stock, like antique family furniture, is made up to mystify the gullible. Everything has sale-tickets on it, from the soil to the householder himself. Being given your money, they solve the problem to convey it over to them with the least expense. All the sights are nets spread to catch the Fly, and it is You. Behold what twenty or thirty years of mercenary training make of a population once plain and honest, and whose contact did good to the city folks who came down there. The household loaf has gone, the butter comes out of the creamery, for they marvellously well practice the processes of skimming cream off and falsifying wine; they have all the vices of city tradesmen and none of their virtues.

On your starting home, you reckon on your money. There is a big hole in it and you grumble. You are wrong. You can never pay

too dearly for the full proof that there are some things money cannot buy.

Having need of a skilful and intelligent employée about your house, you hunt for the rare bird. According to the principle that money will buy everything, you ought—pursuant to the scale of your offer: fair, good, very good, rich pay—find employées so-so, passable, ordinary, pretty good, excellent. But all those forthcoming present themselves as in the superior category, and probably show certificates to support the claim I grant that nine out of ten, put to the practical test, fail to know anything about their business. Then why did they enter your service? In plain truth, they ought to reply, as the cook does, in the farce, when asked why she offers herself as a first-class cook when she was but a plain one?—"because as first-class the tradesman gives me a bigger commission on the bills!"

This is the main point: the earnest money.

You will find plenty who want the high berths. Less often will you find any one to fill them. If it is probity you seek, the difficulties increase. Easily come the mercenaries; the self-sacrificing, another pig in the

poke. Far from me to deny the existence of devoted servants and employées honest and intelligent at the same time. But you will meet as many—and often more, among the ill-paid as the well-paid. It little matters where they are met, in short, for be sure that they are not devoted for the profit, but because they preserved the simplicity rendering them capable of abnegation.

People go hawking about that "money is the sinews of war." Granted that war costs much money, as the French know—to their cost. Is that the same as saying that to defend his country against the enemy and honor the flag, a man's country must be wealthy? The Greeks undertook to show the Persians the proof to the contrary and the lesson has been frequently repeated in history. With gold, can be bought ships, great guns and horses; but not military genius, political wisdom, discipline and enthusiasm. Put billions in recruiting sergeants' hands and charge them to bring a great war-captain and an army of tatterdemalions such as won Valmy. You may find a hundred captains to one real one and a thousand men for a company worth

their billet, but send them under fire! you will be out for your money!

At least, you will allow us to imagine that with cash misery may be soothed and good done? Alas! another illusion that must be dropped. Money, in large or small sums, is a seed that generates abuses. You will only wreak ill with it unless you add intelligence, kindness, great experience of men, and you strongly risk corrupting those receiving your bounty and those distributing it.

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Money cannot do everything; it is a power, but not the Mighty one. Nothing so snarls up life, and demoralises men, or falsifies the normal functions of society like the development of the mercenary spirit. Wherever it reigns, everybody is the dupe. Nobody is trusted there and nothing can be had at its worth. We are no detractors of money, but it must have the common law applied to it: "Everything in its place." When money, that ought to be a servant, becomes a tyrannic force, disrespectful of moral life, dignity and liberty, when some seek to procure it at any price, bringing into market what is not merchandise —when the possessors of wealth imagine that

they can wring from others what is not to be bought or sold, we must rise against this gross and criminal superstition and loudly cry out against the imposition: "Let your money perish with you!" What man has as precious has generally come to him gratuitously—even so, let him give it away freely.

CHAPTER IX.

ADVERTISING AND THE HIDDEN TALENT.

One of our principal puerilities is the love of publicity. Some are so eaten up with the fever to pierce through the dead level—flare up out of the obscurity that they may own that they are afflicted with the very itch of notoriety. Obscurity is ignominy itself; they do everything to get noticed. They consider themselves in their quiet like lost persons; like those shipwrecked sailors who, being cast upon a desert rock, have recourse to shouting, building a fire or shooting off blank cartridges, making all imaginable signals to tell someone that they are there. Not content with firing off crackers and burning blue fire, which are innocent enough, many stoop to baseness and crime to make themselves known. That incendiary, Erostratus, has had numerous disciples. How many have become noted

because of destroying something remarkable, defacing, or trying to do so, an illustrious reputation, signalising their passing, in fact, by a scandal, wickedness or barbarity re sounding?

This mania for notoriety is not only seething in crack-brains, or in the ring of dubious financiers, quacks, and play-actors of all ranks, but spreads into all the realm of spiritual and material life. Puffery infests politics, literature, science itself, and still more shocking! charity and religion. The trumpet is blown around good works, and pandemonium has been renewed to make converts. Pursuing its ravages, the fever for noise gains ordinarily silent spots, and disturbs souls generally settled, while vitiating in a large measure activity for welfare. The abuse to show up all—or rather to display, the growing capacity to see anything in what is hidden and the habit of measuring things by the uproar they make—these finish by altering the most steady judgment. One wonders lest society should end in one great Vanity Fair, where every exhibitor beats the big drum of his own show.

It is willingly that we quit the dusty and in-

tolerably cacophonous open-air shows to breathe at ease in some secluded vale, surprised to see the spring so limpid, the forest keeping secrets, and the loneliness agreeable. Thank heaven, there are still some uninvaded sanctuaries! However formidable may be the hurlyburly, however deafening the hullabaloo, where one hears the "tout's" bleating, the whole only passes a limit where it drops and dies away. The kingdom of silence is vaster than noise's, and there we can be consoled.

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Let us stand on the sill of the ignored good—the silent laborer's—an endless world. We all agree about the charm felt at sight of the immaculate snow where no foot is printed, the flowers that grow in solitude, and the natural paths seeming to climb towards the limitless skyline.

The globe is like the watches where the most active agents are the concealed. Nature has a kind of playfulness in masking her labor. Desiring to observe other things than results, and penetrate the secrets of her laboratory, one must take the pains to watch her, and be ingenious enough to surprise her. Similarly in human bodies, forces acting for good dwell

invisible as they do in our lives. The best are uncommunicable, plunged deeply in our recesses. The more energetic our sentiments, confounded with the root of our being, the less they seek ostentation; it would be profane for them to parade in broad daylight.

There is an inexpressible covert gladness in possessing all to one's self an inner world known to God alone, whence come impulses, "go," daily renewal of our courage and the most mighty motives for outer acts. When this inner life wanes in intensity, from man neglecting it to take care of the surface, he loses in earnest all he fancies he gains without. By sad fatality it happens that we are worth the less when we are most admired. And we remain convinced that the best thing in the world is what is not known, for only the enjoyers know, and also that to talk of it would be letting it out to be lost, to its very perfume.

Some passionate lovers of nature worship her in remote nooks, in the deeps of woods, in the hollows of the sunken ways, where the common wayfarer is not allowed to contemplate her. For days they will dwell there, forgetting time and life to gaze into inviolable

solitudes, upon the bird building her nest or feeding her brood, or the game given over to its graceful gambols. Thus must we seek good in its home, where there is no constraint or striking attitudes, no audience of any sort, but the downright fact of a life wishful to be good at any cost—without heed of any other thing.

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Allow some observations taken from the life. There can be no betrayal of confidence since we mention no names.

In my Alsatian country, on a lonesome road which stripes the forests of the Vosges Mountain range interminably, was a road-stone-breaker whom I have known these thirty years. The first time I saw him I was a young scholar leaving home for the big city of my studies. My heart was heavy. The sight of this fellow did me good as he was humming a song while splitting up the rock. We passed a few words between us, and he told me at the end:

"On we go, my laddie! good heart and good luck!"

Since then I have gone up and come down that road, under the most diversified circum-

stances, painful or gladsome. The scholar has made his way—but the stone-breaker sticks where he was. But he has taken some precautions against the weather: a straw mat protects his back, and his felt hat is pulled more forward so as to shield his head. But the forest still rings back the echo of his valiant hammer. How many squalls have whizzed over that poor old back, how many vexations on his life, his family's and his country! He continues to crack stones; and whether I was coming home or setting off again, I found him by the wayside, smiling despite his age and his wrinkles, kindly, having ready—particularly in bad weather—those simple sayings of the honest man which are so effective when the stone-cleaving hammer beats time to them. It is utterly impossible for me to express the emotion the sight of that plain man produced on me. Surely he never suspected it. I do not know a more comforting sight, but at the same time more cutting to the vanity fermenting in our bosoms than such facing an obscure toiler, doing his work just like the oak growing and as the good God bids the sun to rise—without heeding who looks at him.

I have known many aged teachers of both sexes, who passed their lives in work much the same; hammering the rudiments of knowledge and some principles of conduct into heads sometimes as hard as rocks. They do that with all their soul, along a lengthy and painful career, where men's attention takes little place. When they lie down in their ignored grave, none will remember them save some humble bodies like themselves. But their recompense was in their love for others; there are no greater souls than these.

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How many hidden talents may not be discovered, when one knows where to seek, in that list of persons ridiculed thoughtlessly by those who could be taxed with cruelty, stupidity and ingratitude. I am speaking of Old Maids. Remarks are deigned upon their dress and bearing, which is not of any consequence, as though urprising; it may be pointed out that others than they think solely of their comforts and are wrapt up only in their pets, canary, cat or macaw, which absorb their affection, and that certainly they are not more selfish than old bachelors. But what is ignored to their wrong is the amount of sac-

rifice modestly hidden in the lives of old spinsters plainly admirable. Is there nothing in having no family circle, love, future, or self-wishes? to take upon one that cross of solitude so weighty to bear; above all when to actual loneliness is to be added that of the heart; to forbid having any interest on earth but for old parents or young children, the poor and the infirm, of all that the machinery of life hurls out as slag. Seen from without, these lives are so faded that they show little glow, exciting pity rather than envy. Those approaching them with respectfulness, oft guess dolorous secrets, great ordeals passed through, heavy burdens under which bend fragile shoulders—but this is only the shady side. You must be enabled to appreciate that wealth of the heart, pure goodness, the power to love others, to console them and to make them hope; the joyful gift of self, the invincible obstinacy as regards finding sweetness and pardon, even towards the unworthy. Poor old ladies! how many you have saved from the wreck; healed of wounds, picked up from among the strayed, clothed, mothered the orphans, how many would have been alone in the world if they had not you who often

stood without a soul! I mistake! some one knows you: that unknown Pity, which watches over our lives and suffers for our woes. Forgot like you, and often cursed, she has entrusted to you some of her holiest messages, which is no doubt the reason that along your demure passage one thinks to hear the rustling of angels' wings.

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Hidden good is so often hidden under divers forms that it is as hard to descry it as well dissimulated misdeeds. A Russian doctor who spent ten years in Siberia, condemned to hard labor for political offences, delighted to recount traits of generosity, courage, and humanity observed not only among convicts, but in the keepers. At this one is tempted to exclaim: "Where will we find virtue?"

Indeed, life offers great surprises and disconcerting contrasts. There are officially recognised honorable men, cited in their circles, almost guaranteed by the powers that be, who are never blamed for a thing save a hardness of heart and stiff necks, so that with astonishment one runs up against them in squalid lodgings where lurk fallen stars—

there they show tenderness and a sort of thirst of doing good.

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Speaking farther of the ignored well-doers, I should like to tell of men unanimously treated with the utmost injustice: the rich. Some believe they have emptied the vials of wrath when they brand them as the Infamous Capitalists. For such, all boasting a great fortune are monsters gorged with the blood of the unfortunate. The less harsh-spoken do not fail to confound wealth with selfishness and insensibility. These errors, involuntary or intended, ought to be set right. Of course, there are rich men who "care nothing for nobody," and others who do good out of vainglory. We know them. But does not their conduct, inhuman or hypocritical, rob their kindness of value when they hide it with such perfect shamefulness?

I knew a man on whom had fallen all the griefs that may crush us in our affections. He had lost a beloved wife and buried all his children, at varied ages. But he possessed a great fortune derived from his exertions. Living with extreme simplicity, almost without personal wants, he spent his time in seeking

occasions to do good and profit by them. None can imagine how many culprits he caught in flagrant shrinking poverty, how many means he planned to relieve tribulations, light up sombre lives and make friendly surprises to his acquaintances. His pleasure was in doing good and enjoying the beneficiaries' surprise at not guessing where it came from. He rejoiced in repairing the unfairness of fate, in leading ill-luck's fugitives to weep with gladness. Unpausingly he plotted, schemed, and circumvented in the background, with a childish glee not to be caught with his hand in his purse. Not till after his death were his pranks known and how many never came out?

He was really and truly a sharer! for there are two kinds. Those who long to share in another's property are many and common; to belong it is enough to have a keen appetite. Those hungering to share their goods with the non-possessors are rare and precious at present, for to enlist in their picked company a man must have an honest and worthy heart, free from selfishness, and as sensitive for good as evil in his fellows. Happily the race of such sharers is not dead, and I feel unalloyed

satisfaction in doing them a homage they never would claim.

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Excuse my persisting. It does one good, by way of ridding one's self of the gall at so much infamy, slander and pessimism, and quackery, to rest the sight on something lovely, and breathing the odor from stray corners where simple goodness flourishes. A foreign lady, no doubt little hardened to Parisian doings, once told me of the disgust inspired by the sight under view: The villainous posters, the wicked newspapers, the women with dyed hair, and the crowds running about to the races, variety theatres, gaming houses, and all corruption—the sea of worldly and veneered life. She did not utter the name of Babylon, but that was spared, of course, from pity for this one inhabitant of the town of perdition.

"Alas, yes! sorry sights, madam; but you have not seen all."

"Lord forbid!" said she.

"Nay; I would to the contrary that you might see all, for, if there are layers very ugly, there are some comforting. Besides, only change the part of the town you are looking at, or look another time. Treat

yourself to the sight of Paris at dawn, furnishing you with many scenes to correct your impression of Paris by night. Go and see among other laborers the street sweepers up and out at an hour when the roysterers and 'pickers-up' are turning in. Mark what stern countenances they have with their statuesque busts under their splashed smocks! with what set faces they sweep away the crumbs of the night repast! You might call them prophets on Belshazzar's threshold. Old men are among them and women, too—alack! When it is frosty, they just blow on their fingers and to it anew! So it goes on every day—and they, too, are Parisians.

"Next go into the suburbs, into the working places, and particularly the petty workshops where the master works beside his men. Watch the army of handiwork men marching to their toil. How brave those workgirls are, merrily coming down from the far-off hills unto the stores, workrooms, and offices of the town.

"Then, peep inside the houses and see the common folks hard at it. The workingwoman is meanly paid: the room is small, the children are numerous and, often, the man is

'ugly.' Make a collection of *the small fry's* biography, the budgets of the lower classes—look long and closely.

"Go over the bridge and see the students. Those who make riots on the streets are many, but those who study are legion. If you only could be aware how they plod at it in the Latin Quarter! You have seen the press which is full of jocularity about the pretendedly studious youth. The papers tell of those who break windows, but why not mention those who sit up late over the problems of science and history? That would not interest the reading public! Therefore, when one of the band, a medical student, dies a victim to professional duty, a couple of lines in the public sheet testifies to that. But a drunken squabble occupies half a column, with the slightest item caught and fixed and made much of. Nothing is omitted but a portrait of 'the hero' and not even that, sometimes!

"I should never have done if I undertook to point out to you all to be seen if you want all; you would have to make the tour of our whole society, rich and poor, wise and ignorant. But you would certainly then judge less severely. Paris is a world and, as

in the world at large, the good is under a cloud while the bad spreads like a peacock's tail. When the surface is looked at, the wonder is that so much scum floats. But on going to the bottom, one is astonished, on the reverse, that in this seething, darksome and ofttimes horrible mess, so many virtues thrive!"

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But why do I dwell upon such things? Is it not drawing notice upon those holding it in horror? It is not thus I wish to be understood. My aim is to have ignored good attended to, and, above all, loved and practised. Man is lost who is pleased with what glitters and catches the eye; first, because he is exposed to see mostly the bad; next, because he is apt to see the good in only such as seek to be looked at, and because he easily yields to the temptation of living for appearance's sake. Not only ought he to resign himself to obscurity but like it, if not wishing to glide into the rank of the theatrical supernumerary who observes his proper bearing while under the spectators' view but indulges, in the side entrance, in capers to counteract for the constraint imposed on the stage. We are here in

presence of one of the essentials of moral life. What we say is not sheerly for the humble, who ought not to be remarked. It is just as true for the leading actors. If you are not willing to be a brilliant inutility, a pasteboard man laced and gilded, but with nothing inside but bombast, you must act your foremost part with the spirit of lowliness in your least playfellows. The player, only good in the sensational scene, is good for nothing. If we enjoy the perilous honor of being in sight and taking the lead in the procession, maintain in life the inner sanctuary of ignored good with all the more care. Give the edifice of which our fellow-beings see but "the elevation," a broad basis of simplicity and humble faithfulness.

And still cling to those strangers to whom is due sympathy and gratitude. Is it not true that we owe everything to them? I call as witnesses all who have made the fortifying experience in the human temple that the underground stones are sustaining the entire structure. All who attain a marked and recognised value in public owe it to some humble but spiritual ancestors and forgotten inspirers. A small number of good souls, often

including common folk, women, the vanquished in the battle of life, parents as modest as venerated, personify for us the fair and noble life. Their example lifts us up and holds us on high. Their memory forever dwells inseparable from our inner life. In our sorrowing hours we see them, tranquil and courageous, and our burdens wax lighter. They close up, serried around us, an unseen phalanx, but beloved, preventing us stumbling and losing ground in the action; and every day they prove to us that the treasure of humankind is the good the world does not know.

CHAPTER X.

HOME LIFE AND THE WORLDLY ONE.

During the Second French Empire (1852-'70), there was a mayor over one of our prettiest petty government districts, near a sea-bathing-place frequented by the Emperor Napoleon III. This mayor was a very worthy man and intelligent withal, but his head was suddenly turned when it occurred to him that the Chief of the State might some day pay him a visit. Up to this he had lived on the old ancestral homestead, fond of the least memories it bore. But so soon as the idea was fixed in his brain of receiving the sovereign, he became another man. What had seemed sufficient, and luxurious even,—the simplicity endeared to his family and those gone before them,—appeared to his new sight shabby, ugly and contemptible. It was out of the rules to show an emperor up those wooden stairs, beg

him to be seated on those aged chairs, and allow him to tread the superannuated carpets. So he called in the builder and the masons, who attacked the walls with pick-ax and crowbar, and, demolishing the partitions, a parlor was made out of all proportion from its size and luxury with the rest of the house. He and the family had to shrink up into a few rooms, where the extra furniture, discarded, annoyed every one of them. Having by this conceit emptied his purse and turned the home upside down, he waited for the imperial guest. Woeful to tell! he saw the Empire go but not the Emperor come!

This poor man's folly is not as rare as might be thought. They are all brain-sick who like him sacrifice home comfort to outer show.

The danger of such outlays is worse in agitated times. Then a greater number of those exposed to it surrender. How many family hoards have been squandered to pure loss to satisfy worldly demands and ambition, and the happiness for whose reception the offerings were made is still a-coming. It is to buy a gold brick to give up the hearthstone, let sound traditions fall into disuse, and throw over simple domestic customs. Inner life has

such a place in society that weakening it is enough to shake the whole fabric. To enjoy normal development this organism needs to be supplied with well-tempered individuals, having their own worth and private valuation-mark. Otherwise, society becomes a flock and one oft without a shepherd. But where is the individual going to obtain his originality, that unique quality which united to others distinctive, constitutes the wealth and solid nature of a circle? Only in the family. Destroy that galaxy of memories and practice, making each community a miniature clime, and you sever the roots of public spirit.

It is important to the country that every fireside should be a world, deep-seated, respected, and communicating to its members an ineffaceable moral imprint. But before proceeding, let us brush away a misunderstanding. Like all fine things, the family idea has the caricature known as domestic selfishness. Some are like those strongholds wherein were planned forays upon the outer world. All not directly concerning that one group is indifferent. They are like colonial visitors, not to say foreigners, intruding in this fame. Their exclusiveness is carried so

far that they become enemies of our kind. On the minor scale they resemble those mighty societies, which, formed from time to time in history, grasped the rule over fashion and reckoned no one in each with itself. This is the impetus which sometimes considers the family as a den of egoism, to be destroyed for social safety. But after the same manner as there is a gulf between human minds and party spirit, so there is between the family spirit and that of a familiar coterie.

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Now, we are talking about the family spirit, as which nothing in the world is so valuable, for it contains in the germ the grand and simple virtues assuring the command and duration of social institutions. At its base stands respect for the past, for the best treasure in a family is the common recollections. An intangible, individual and inalienable capital, they are a sacred trust. Each member ought to hold them as the dearest thing. They exist under the double head: idea and fact. They are encountered in the language, nooks of the mind, the sentiment and the very instincts. Under a material shape they are seen in the family portraits, furniture, buildings, apparel

and lingering songs. These are trash to the profane; to those knowing how to properly esteem them, relics not to be cast off at any price.

But what ordinarily happens in our world? Worldliness wages war on the family. All the struggles are poignant and I know none more impassioned. By all manner of means and sorts of habits, new ones, requirements, affectations, the worldly tendency rushes into the domestic sanctuary. What are this stranger's titles and rights? On what does it rest its peremptory claims? Usually, one neglects to demand them. That is wrong. We should not bear ourselves to this intruder as poor simple folk do towards an unwonted visitor. For such a bothersome guest, they pillage their flower garden, hustle their servants, and children, and lay aside their work in hand—unjust and unskilful conduct! They ought to have the stoutness to go on right as they were, no matter what they face.

This worldliness has the utmost impudence. Here is a home formed and still kept by characters of mark; inmates, furniture and habits, all suit it. But by marriage, or connections through pleasure or business, in struts World-

liness. It finds everything plain, old and awkward; it is not up-to-date! At first, it bounds itself to criticism and witty gibes. That is the critical instant! Be on your guard, for this is The Enemy! If you let yourself the least bit be perforated by the reasoning, tomorrow you will send a fine piece of furniture to the lumber-room, next day will go to the dustbin some good old tradition, and, little by little, the relics dear to the heart, familiar objects, and filial piety along with them, will be packed off to the curio-dealer.

With the scene changed and the new landmarks, your old relatives and former friends will lose their bearings. You will take still another back-step by cold-shouldering them, too; worldliness suppresses everything aged. In this new setting, you will be astonished to see yourself "translated." Nothing now will trouble your memory or mind—but it will be "correct" and, at least, the world will be satisfied. Alas! that is where you go wrong! After having hurled off your pure treasures like so much old iron, it will point out that you are not at ease in your new livery and hasten to make you feel all the ridiculousness of it. You had better at the outset to have

been bold in your own standing and defended your home.

Many newly-wed couples yield to the insinuations of Worldliness. Their parents set them the pattern of modest living; but the rising generation believes it ought to affirm its rights to exist and to live freely, by repudiating a style which is in its eyes rather fossilised. So it seeks to instal itself in the latest vogue, at the greatest expense, and so sells off useful things at a low price. Instead of filling the rooms with things which whisper: "Remember!" the new cabinet-stuff comes in which has no thoughts attached. Stop! they often are symbols of easy and fleeting living. In amid them, one breathes the headache-giving vapors of secularity: recalling outdoor whirling and the "step lively!" And were one wishful to forget them sometimes, they bring back the mind, and, in another sense, do say: "Remember! do not forget it is the hour for the ball, the play, the races!" The life within doors so is organised that it becomes the spring-board on which one rests a spell between two leaps. It is not safe to stay long upon it. As the world has no soul, it does not appeal to that. Snatch the time to doze, eat

and, quick! out you go! This makes one cross and sleepified.

All know the sort fuming to be off and out, who imagine that the fashionable figures will stop if they are not in their places. The worst of all lots is to be kept at home—they would not like to see an Interior even in painting. The horror of home life so chafes them that they prefer to pay for amusement elsewhere though they might disport at home free gratis.

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Gradually, society thus slides off real life in blocks—life in public which is not public life. These clusters are like swarms of flies in sunshine. The nearest parallel to one fashionable course is another's. This universal tameness destroys the very essence of a public life. There is no need to take long travels to reckon the ravage made by worldliness in current society and if we have so little balance, foundation, calm good sense and spirit of intuition, one of the main reasons is this diminution of home life. The common people lock-step with the upper class. For it is fashionable, after its kind, to quit home to haunt the liquor-saloon. The miserable and vicious state of the dwellings does not sufficiently ac-

count for the flight from home. Why should the countryman desert the house where his father and his father before him took such pleasure, for the inn and tavern? It is the same roof and the same fire burns on the hearth in the old chimney-place; why should it light up empty chairs instead of the ingle where the young and the old took their fun cheek by jowl? Something has modified men's mind. Cringing to diseased desires, they have broken off with simplicity. Fathers desert their post of honor to vegetate by the lonely fireplace, and the children quarrel while awaiting their cue to go away, each on his side.

Home life and the domestic way must be resumed. Pious solicitude has sanctified some monuments, the sole fragments of the past. In the same way, pious hands ought to cherish the olden costume, the rustic dialects and ancient ballads before they disappear. How handsome it will be of us to preserve these remnants of a grand past—vestiges of ancestral souls! Let us do the same with family traditions; save and cause to last as long as possible all that lingers still of the patriarchal, under no matter what shape!

But everybody does not have traditions to preserve. The stronger grounds for redoubling efforts to constitute and cultivate family life. For this no need of being many or roomily installed. To build up a home one needs but the home instinct. As the smallest hamlet may have its story and moral impression, the least home may have its spirit. Oh, that local spirit—the atmosphere surrounding us in human abodes! What a mass of mysteries! In one place the threshold strikes you with a chill and ill ease masters you! something unseizable repulses you. Next door, when the door is closed after you, good humor and benevolence environ you. It is said: Walls have ears. They also have their voices—a mute eloquence. Man's spirit floats about wherever man has dwelt. I see a proof of this feeling in the room of the lone woman or the bachelor.

What a chasm between one room and another. This has inertness, indifference, and earth hugs earthliness! the inmate's motto is written in the way he sticks up his photographs and stacks his books—"Don't care a hang!" That has the joy of the glee of living, the communicative hand-in-hand; the caller

feels something telling him under a thousand forms: "Whoever you are, though guest only for an hour, I wish you welcome! peace be with you!"

The power of the home cannot be adequately enlarged upon, or the influence of the flower on the window plant, or the comfort of the easy chair in which the grand dad sat, as he offered his wrinkled hand to the chubby-cheeked children's kiss. Poor modern folk! always changing apartments or altering their houses! In modifying the face of our towns, houses, customs and beliefs, so that we know no more where to lay our heads, we only deepen our glumness and swell the vacuum in our unsettled careers by shunning home life.

Let us rekindle the flame on the cold hearth, create inviolable refuges, warm nests where the young will grow up to be men, where love will find a cosy nook, old age a resting place, prayer an altar and the country a stand for its flag!

CHAPTER XI.

SIMPLE BEAUTY.

In æsthetics' name some may protest against any organisation of simple life or oppose the theory of useful expenditure—the providence of business, the great nurse for arts and the ornament of civilised society. We are going to reply beforehand with some brief remarks.

It will have been noticed that the spirit animating these pages is not the utilitarian one. It would be erroneous to think that the simplicity we are advocating has any common link with that imposed on the avaricious by meanness and on narrow minds by mock rigorism. For the first, simple life would be cheap life; for the other, a dull, vegetating one, where the merit would lodge in depriving one's self of all that smiles, glitters and charms.

It will not displease us if those with much means would put their fortune into circula-

tion instead of hoarding it, making trade lively and the fine arts prosper. They are doing very nicely with their privileged position. What we are fighting against is stupid prodigality, the selfishness of riches, and, particularly, the hunting after superfluity by those who stand in need of taking care of the necessities. Mecænas' lavishness will not have the same effect on society as that of a vulgar "plunger," startling the lookers-on by the show and folly of his scrambled gold pieces. The same term here denotes different things: to disseminate silver is not the whole act; some ways of scattering coin ennoble a man and some sully him. To distribute cash assumes that you are plentifully supplied. When the love of sumptuous life carries away those with limited purse, the question singularly changes. What strikes us in these times is the rage for wasting among those who ought to retrench. We willingly grant that munificence is a social grace. At a stretch, it may be sustained that prodigality in some plutocrats is a safety-valve to carry off the overflow; but we are not going to dispute that. But too many throw open the waste gates when it would be to their gain and duty to practise

saving; their spending and love of it are private griefs and public danger. So much for useful luxury!

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We would now explain ourselves upon the æsthetic question—oh, mildly! and without encroaching on the specialists' territory. Through a common illusion, beauty and simplicity are looked upon as rivals. But simple does not mean "plain" in the sense of ugliness, any more than luxuriousness, generosity overdone, or costly display is a synonym for beauty. Our eyes are hurt by the sight of a painted beauty, venal art, and luxury without grace and sprightliness. Wealth tricked out with bad taste makes us sometimes regret that so much money lay in the hands to induce the making of such a prodigious quantity of low art productions. Our art suffers from lack of simplicity as does our literature: over many ornaments, twisted flourishes, and tortured fancies. In line, or color or outline seldom is one given that simplicity to contemplate, allied with perfection, which imposes on the sight as evidence upon the judgment. We need to be dipped again in the ideal purity of immortal loveliness which put its stamp on mas-

terpieces and with one ray will outshine all our pompous exhibitions.

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All most affecting us here is to speak of the ordinary æsthetics, of the care to set the house and person out well, and to give a lustre without which there is no charm. For it is not indifferent whether man should care for this or not. He will acknowledge this if he puts his soul in his work. Far from considering it useless work to embellish, take pains, and poetise forms, I think that he ought to attend to this as much as possible. Nature herself sets the example, and the scorner of the frail sheen of beauty with which we deck our swiftly passing days is not going astray from those high intentions putting the same care in coloring the fleeting floweret as the eternal mountains.

But do not fall into the gross temptation that we confound beauty with what assumes its name. Beauty and the poetry of existence lie in the sense given them. Our homes, table and attire ought to be translated with these intentions. But to act them out, they must be possessed. The possessors know how to set them off by simple measures. Riches can

be dispensed with in lending grace and charm to the dwelling and the apparel. Taste and kindness will suffice. We are touching a point most important to both sexes, but in a greater measure to man.

Those who counsel the sex to wear thicker garments, shapeless sacks of flat uniformity, cross nature in what she holds most sacred and they completely misread the spirit in things. If clothes were but protection from the cold or rain, a water-proof sheet or a sheepskin would be enough. But more is lacking than that. Man does his work fully and transforms his wear into signs. The coat is not just covering, but a symbol. I call in as witness all the rich *flora* of national and provincial costumes and the dress of the ancient guilds. The apparel may often proclaim the man. The more sensible, the better. To be truly fair, it must announce good tidings—things solid and personal. Put all the money going into habits, and though they be in themselves Something, they will be, if out of harmony with the wearer, a mask and a travesty. Fashionable excess by hiding the feminine person under purely conventional ornament, robs her of her principal attraction. The re-

sult of this abuse is that many things called "sweetly pretty," injure beauty as much as women's parents' or husbands' purse.

What would you say of a young lady who textually reproduced the phrases out of a conversational handbook to express her thoughts in exquisitely choice terms? What charm could the set sentences have? The effect of toilets well made in themselves, but worn indiscriminately on anybody, is exactly thus.

I cannot resist quoting here a paragraph of Camille Lemonnier relating to my idea:

"Nature has put at woman's finger-ends what she gained by instinct, her own art, as silk is the silkworm's and fine lace is the spider's own: she is poet and artist by her own grace and candor; the spinner of the 'illusion' with which she arrays her taste to please. All the talent she assumes to resemble man, in other arts, is never worth the design and execution imbued in the ell of cloth she manipulates into a marvel. I would that this art were properly honored. In the same way as education ought to consist in thinking with one's own mind, feeling with one's own heart, and expressing one's self in a personal mode—the 'I' intimate, and latent, but on the con-

trary, a woman shrinks, levels herself with a view to conformity. I wish that the apprentice-mamma, while a young woman, would early become the high priestess of the Toilet æsthetics, her own costumière, as she should be some day her children's dressmaker. But with taste and the gift of conceiving with personal application that masterpiece of skill and womanhood: a dress! without that, woman is but a bundle of rags!"

The self-made dress is almost always the one fitting the best, and it is, any way, the one affording the most pleasure. Ladies forget this too often. Women make the same blunder. Since everybody goes to the same modistes or these have their models copied, grace has all but disappeared from popular costume. And yet what was here to vie in pleasing with the fresh appearance of the young girl clad after the country mode and lovely by the simplicity?

These reflections may be applied to the arrangement and decoration of the home. As there are complete suits revealing a conception of life, hats ranking with "poems," and ribbon-bows equal to those cockades which have allured armies and adorned royal brows,

so there are household settings out-speaking to the mind. Why, under pretext of embellishing our houses, do we deprive them of that characteristic touch always of value? Why assimilate our rooms to those of hotels or railroad-station waiting-halls by giving them the predominance to a uniform type of official beauty?

What a plague it is to walk among the houses, the towns, and the countries of a whole vast continent and to meet identical forms everywhere, unavoidable, irritating by their multiplication! How the love of beauty would gain by simplicity! Instead of this lacquered tinsel, pretentious ornaments insipid with sameness, we would have endless diversity. Happy discoveries would meet the eye. The unexpected sights in their thousand shapes would rejoice us and we would gain the secret of stamping our tapestry, furniture and even the roof-top with that seal of human personality giving antiques their inestimable price.

Let us continue and pass on to terminate with still simpler things, meaning minor household matters which young women find anything but poetical. Their scorn of sub-

stantial occupations, and modest cares claimed by the home, arises from a common but damaging confusion. They think that beauty and poetry are in things or not. Some occupations are aristocratic and graceful, as cultivating the letters or playing the harp, and others disgraceful and coarse, as shining shoes, sweeping out a room, or watching the soup kettle. Childish error! neither the harp nor the broom have anything to do with the matter, as all depends on the hand holding them and the spirit impelling that hand. Poetry is not in things but in us. It must be imposed on things as the sculptor imposes his design on the marble. If our life and occupations too often proceed without charm, despite their exterior distinction, it is due to our putting nothing in them. The climax of art is to make the lifeless move—to train the wild. I wish our young women would tend to develop that art truly feminine of infusing a soul in soulless things. In such fruit is the triumph of womanly grace. None but a woman knows how to fill a dwelling with what the virtue has prompted the poet to say:

"The housetop becomes gay and it laughs!"

It is said that there are no more fairies, but they do not know anything about it who talk so. The poets may find copies of the original fays they sing, still among the lovable mortals who know how to work up the bread with energy, mend the rents with amiability, smile as they care for the ailing, and put grace in a ribbon tie and wit in frying a sole.

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It is quite clear that culture of the fine arts has moralising effect, and our acts are impregnated in the long run with what strikes the sight. But exercise of the arts and contemplation of their productions are privileges reserved for the chosen few. It is not given for every one to own, understand and create lovely things. But one kind of human beauty may go into every place: that born in our wives' and daughters' hands. What house can be adorned without it? Without it, what is the house most adorned? a cold-looking one. With it the nakedest home is animated and lighted up. Among the forces able to ennoble and transform wills, and enhance happiness, none is more universally employed. It can evince its worth by the feeble instruments and under the worst difficulties. Though the room

be small, the pocket-book flat and the table spare, a woman with this gift manages to make order, cleanliness and fair looks reign. She puts carefulness and arts in all she undertakes. To do things thoroughly is not in her eyes the rich man's privilege but everybody's right. Hence she exercises it, and can lend her home a dignity and attractiveness not attained in more blessed places, where all is left to hired help.

Life thus understood is not slow to reveal its riches in unknown beauties, and intimate attractions and satisfactions. To be true to one's self, to realise in its natural envelope the consistent style of loveliness—it is the ideal! How woman's mission grows in depth and significance, and she thus concentrates herself to impart soul to things, and add kindness to that soul, as an outward symbol, those agreeable and delicate processes to which the rudest breasts are sensitive! Is not this better than coveting what one has not, and suiting her desire to the bungling imitation of alien ornamentation?

CHAPTER XII.

ARROGANCE AND SIMPLICITY UNDER SOCIAL RELATIONS.

It might be difficult to find a subject more qualified than arrogance to prove that the hindrances to the better life, stronger and quieter, are far more in ourselves than circumstances. All sorts of conflicts surge inevitably from the diversity and contrasts especially of social situations. But how much the connections between members of the same body would be simplified if we were to insert another spirit in the frame traced by extraneous wants! Let us be fully persuaded that men are not embroiled firstly by class differences, functions and the dissimilar forms of their destinies. Were such the case, we should see idyllic peace reigning among collegians, comrades and all analogously interested, and with like fates. To the contrary, it is well known that the most inveterate quarrels break out between likes, and no bitterer war than

that intestinal. But what prevents men coming to an understanding is chiefly arrogance. Pride turns a man into a hedgehog, not to be touched without wounding.

Let us begin with the rich man's pride.

What rankles me in the rich man, passing in his carriage, is not that equipage, his dress, or the number and bearing of his footmen—it is his contempt. His great fortune would not sting me if I had not a sour temper; but I have good right to turn sour to him if he spatters me, runs over my body, and shows by his attitude that I count as naught in his eyes because I am not rich like him. He galls me, come to think of it! and wantonly galls. He gratuitously insults and humbles me. It is what is not vulgar but noble in me springs up in the teeth of such chafing pride. Do not accuse me of envy, for I have none of that; my manly dignity is affronted. It is useless to seek farther to illustrate these impressions. Any man who has seen life, can recall plenty of experience to justify our sayings. In some sections, given over to pecuniary considerations, the rich man's pride so dominates that the men prize themselves according to their banking account, as stocks are quoted by

their rating. Esteem is measured by the contents of the vault in the safe-deposit. That good society is composed of big "pots," middling to fair "pools" and tolerable backing. After them come the fellows with a little, and those with nothing at all. The behavior to each is on that scale. The one who, relatively well off, shows his disdain for the one less opulent, is subjected in his turn to the superiors' scorn. So the rage for comparison vexes them all from the base to the summit. Such a compost is fitted as well as could be wished for the culture of the wickedest sentiments; but it is the spirit that is put in it which is to blame, and not wealth itself. Some rich men have not this feeling, particularly those who inherited the mint; father and son being habituated to it. But they forget that they ought not to emphasize the contrasts without much delicacy. Supposing there is no harm in enjoying a large surplus, is it indispensable to show off that surplus, shock the eyes of those not having the needful, and parade their luxury to the poor? Good taste and a kind of shame always stay a hearty man from boasting of his keen appetite, his sleeping soundly and exultation in being alive, beside

one dying of consumption. Many rich folk lack tact somewhiles, and, through that, pity and prudence. Are they not misled to complain of envy when they did their utmost to excite it?

But discernment is absent more than anything else, when pride is backed up with fortune, or one lets himself be unconsciously drawn unto the seductions of luxury. Primarily it is falling into a slighting confusion to regard riches as a personal quality. One could not more stupidly take the envelope for the letter. I do not wish to dwell upon the point, as it is too painful. And yet can one hold back from crying out to the persons interested: "Mind, do not mix what you have with what you are. Know the black lining of the splendors mundane better than not to perceive with force moral poverty and childishness. Haughtiness verily lays too ridiculous snares for us. Mistrust the companion who makes us hateful to our neighbor and lose our clearness of wits."

Those carping at the rich man's arrogance forget also another point—the most important: that possession is a social benefice. Undoubtedly, private property is as legitimate as

individual life or liberty. These two are inseparable, and it is an Utopia replete with dangers to attack bases so general of all life. But the citizen is tied by his fibres to society, and all he does ought to be done with a view to the union. Possession is, therefore, less a privilege to glorify one's self upon than an office whose gravity should be felt. After the same manner as an apprenticeship often onerous must be gone through before assuming a social function, so that function known as riches requires training. It is an art to deal with wealth—one of the least easy known. The majority, rich or poor, believe that in opulence all one has to do is live right on. That is why so few carry themselves meetly under riches. In the hands of too many, gold is according to a merry and cutting simile of Luther's, like a harp in a donkey's hoofs. They have no idea how to handle it.

It follows that when a man is met who can be rich and simple at the same time, looking upon his capital as means of fulfilling his human errand, he ought to be greeted respectfully, for he is certainly Somebody. He has won in the obstacle-race, surmounted tests, and triumphed against vulgar or subtle temptations.

He does not liken the contents of his wallet to those of his brain or his heart, and he does not estimate his fellows as so many ciphers. His exceptional position, far from elevating, lowers him, for he feels that he wants to be fully on the level with his duty. He remains a man, and says all: he is to be found, he is succoring, and far from making his money bags a rampart parting him from the rest of mankind, he lays them down to bridge over the rift. Though the post of the wealthy has been singularly spoilt by the proud and the selfish, the true Lord's steward is bound to be appreciated aright by all not insensible to fair play. On going nigh him and seeing how he lives, one retracts and asks: "What would I have become in such a situation? Would I have had his modesty, unconcern, and probity, causing him to act with his own goods as if they were held in trust for others?" So long as there shall be a world and its society, with bitter contests of interests, while envy and selfishness exist on earth, nothing is more worthy respect than the richness penetrated with simplicity. It will do more than earn pardon—it will make itself beloved.

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The pride built upon power is more malevolent than that backed by wealth, meaning by power all sway that one man has over another and whether limited or boundless. I can see no way of avoiding the unequal power among men. All organizations suppose a degree of force; we can never get out of that. But I fear that if the taste for power be widely spread, its spirit is hard to find. From misunderstanding it and misusing it, those holding even a particle of authority finish almost always by spotting it.

Power exercises upon its controller a very strong influence. None but a firm head escapes being troubled by it. The lunacy overcoming the Roman Emperors in their supreme might, is an universal malady existing from time out of mind. In every breast is the dormant tyrant, waiting but for the propitious moment to awake. Now, the tyrant is the worst enemy of authority, as he represents its intolerable caricature. Consequently, a throng of social entanglements, friction and hatred. Any man who says to those dependent on him: "You are going to do this because it is my will—(or better) because it is my good pleasure!" he does a bad piece of busi-

ness. In each of us is something that bids us resist personal power and it is a respectable feeling. For, at bottom, we are equal, and no one has the right to order me about because he is He and I am me; in this case, his command degrades, and one must not allow himself to be degraded.

One has to be brought up in schools, factories, armies, government service and trace nearby the relations between masters and servants, and have dwelt for study some while where man exerts supremacy over man, to form an idea of the evil wrought by those wielding authority with arrogance. Of free men, they make slavish spirits—I mean, rebellious ones. It seems as though this baleful, anti-social effect is more surely produced when the commander is the nearer the commanded in rank. The most merciless tyrant is the petty one. An understrapper, foreman or monitor, puts more ferocity in his conduct than the employer or director. The corporal is harsher with the privates than the colonel. In households where the mistress has no higher training than her cook, they treat one another like the warder and the convict. Woe

anywhere to the man fallen into the hands of the subaltern drunk with his authority!

It is too well ignored that the first duty of one exercising power is humility. Overbearing is not authority. We are not the Law, which is over all our heads. We give it out only, but to impress its value on others we must submit ourselves to it. Commandment and obedience are but two forms of the same virtue: voluntary service. Most often you are not obeyed because you did not first obey.

The secret of moral ascendancy lies in commanding with simplicity. It softens the hardness of the fact. Its power is not lodged in the stripe on the arm, or the rank or the disciplinary measures. It uses not the rod or threats and yet it obtains everything—why? because each feels that they, too, are ready to do anything. What confers on another the right to sacrifice his time, money, passions and even his life is not sheerly that he has likewise resolved to make all these sacrifices, but that he has already done so, mentally. In the order given out by a man in this mood is an indescribable power communicated to him who ought to obey, and aiding him to do his duty.

In all lines of human activity, there are chiefs who inspire, uphold and electrify their followers; under their direction a company does wonders. With them all efforts are possible, men feel capable of any effort, ready to go through fire, according to the popular expression, and it is with enthusiasm that they march.

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But the pride of the great is not alone: there is that of the paltry, the low sneer which is counterpart of the lofty haughtiness. The root of each is identical. The speaker of "I am the Law!" is not merely the puffed-up, imperious being who provokes insurrection by his attitude alone; but the under-officer whose rash head will not admit that there is somebody above him.

Positively, a number of men are irritated by any superiority. Any advice is an offence; criticism, imposition; orders, attacks on their freedom; they will undergo no rule. To respect any one or thing seems to them mental aberration. In their way they say to you: "Where we are, there is no place for others."

Of this proud family are also the excessively irritable and testy who, in lowly condi-

tions, do not think that their superiors do them enough honor; who are not contented with the best and most humane treatment and who go through their work as if they were victims. In these chagrined souls is misplaced self-conceit. They do not know how to fill their post simply, and muddle up their lives and others' by ridiculous requirements and unfair covert thinking.

When the trouble is taken to examine man closely, one is surprised to see how many harbors pride has in the humble as they are admittedly called. Such is this vice's power that it manages to build around those living under modest surroundings a wall thickly parting them from their neighbor. There they sulk, entrenched, barricaded, in their ambition and disdain, as unapproachable as the mighty of earth behind their aristocratic prejudices. It is the same old story for the mean as the majestic, impotent and solitary, distrusting everybody, which bemuddles all. Never can it be too often repeated that if there is so much hatred and hostility between classes differing, it is less owing to external fatality than internal ones. Antagonism of interests and of situations dig pits between us,—that,

nobody can deny; but pride converts these pits into gulfs and out of the depths it halloas to us: "There is nothing in common between us!"

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We have not finished with pride, but it is impossible to paint it under all its shapes. I hold it the sharpest grudge when it meddles with science and sterilises it. We owe knowledge, as we do riches and power, to our fellows. It is a social force for serving us, but it cannot be so if those having it, keep it from those who want it. When knowledge transforms itself into an instrument for ambition, it destroys itself.

What can be said of the pride in honest folk? for it exists there and makes goodness itself hateful! The upright man who repents for the evil done by others, dwells in social truth and community. The one who scorns others for their faults and going crooked, cuts himself off from his kind, and, descending to the rank of a vain ornament to his own vanity, becomes like the rich whom goodness does not move, and the authority not tempered with the leaven of obedience. As well to the haughty rich as the overbearing master, overbearing

virtue is detestable. It molds traits and an attitude of provocation. His example drives us away instead of attracting, and those whom it deigns to honor with its boons feel as if they had their ears boxed.

Let us sum up and conclude:

It is error to infer that our advantages, whatever they are, ought to be put at the call of our vanity. Each of them, for those who enjoy them, constitute an obligation and not a motive of glorification. Material blessings, power, knowledge, cordial and mental qualities become so many causes of discord when serving to fatten pride. They remain benevolent only if the possessors are subjects of modesty. Be humble if you possess much, because that proves that we are debtors; all a man owns he owes to somebody, and are we sure of the power to pay our debts?

Be humble, though we are clothed with important holdings and our hands grasp others' fates, for it is impossible that a clearsighted man should not perceive what lies beyond grave duties.

Be humble if we have great knowledge, for it serves us at best only to gauge the greatness of the Unknown and to compare the trifle we

have gained with the mass of what we owe to others' exertions.

Lastly, be humble above all if we are virtuous, for none ought more plainly to feel his shortcomings than he whose conscience is quickened, and more than others he ought to feel the need to be indulgent and suffer for them who wreak evil.

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"But what would you do with mental distinctions?" it may peradventure be asked. "By dint of simplicity, are you not going to efface the sentiment of distances, important to maintain for the proper procession of society?"

I am not of the opinion to suppress distances and distinctions. But I think that what distinguishes a man is not to be found in his grade, office or uniform, any more than in his fortune—but wholly in himself. More than any other time, ours is perforated with the vanity of purely outward emblems. To be anybody now, it is no longer enough to wear an imperial mantle or a royal crown; what use is it then to bicker over a strip of lace, a coat of arms or a collar? Granted that external badges are not to be contemned, having

their meaning and utility, but on condition of covering something and not nullity. On the day when they are backed by nothing, they grow useless and dangerous. The sole real distinguishing is to show value. If you wish social distinction, so necessary and respectable in itself, to be effectively respected you must make it, firstly, worthy. Otherwise, you help towards making it hated and despised. It is unfortunately too certain a fact that respect is below par among us, and certainly not the lack of marks for respect. The cause of the defect is the prejudice that a lofty station dispenses the occupant from observing the current duties of life. In elevating us, it is thought that we are freed from the law. And so we forget the spirit of obedience and modesty, which should grow with the situation. It ensues that those claiming most respect for their office make the least efforts to deserve the respect. Hence why respect is diminishing.

The sole needed distinction is trying to be better. The man forcing himself to be better, becomes more humble, more approachable, and more familiar with those owing him respect.

But as he gains by being known close-to-hand, the hierarchy loses nothing and he gathers in as much more respect as he sowed less pride.

CHAPTER XIII.

TRAINING FOR SIMPLICITY.

Simple Life being chiefly the outcome of a direction of the mind, it is logical that education should have much influence in its confines.

There are two modes of rearing children: the first consists in training the child to be all for itself; the other, to be for the parents utterly.

In the former, the child is regarded as a complement of the parents. It is part of their holdings and fills a place among their possessions. Ofttimes this place is noble—when the parents particularly appreciate affectionate life. Otherwise, when sordid interests rule, the child takes the second, third or last place. In no case is it anybody. While young, he gravitates around his parents, not only through obedience, which is rightful, but by

subordination of all his initiative movements and being. Proportionately to his advance in age, this submission becomes sharper and turns into confiscation, extending over his notions, feelings and other qualities. His minority is perpetuated. In lieu of slowly evoluting towards independence, man progresses into slavery. He is what he is allowed to be, what is required of him by his father's trade, craft or business, as well as his religious beliefs, political opinions and artistic tastes. He will think, act, marry and bring up his family under the meaning and within the bounds of paternal absolutism. This domestic despotism may be exercised by people without will; it is enough if they are convinced that good order rules the child to be the parents' property. If devoid of energy, they overrule him by other means, sighing, entreating, and bribing him basely. If they cannot enchain him they catch him with bird-lime. But the only admissible point is that he shall live in them, by and for them.

This kind of training is not practised solely in the family, but also in the great social leagues having as educational function, in principal, to grasp new-comers in order to

cram them into the existing molds in the most irresistible manner. It is the reduction, trituration and absorption of the individual within a social body, whether theocratic, communist, or simply routine and civil-service-like. Viewed from outside, such a system seems preeminently simple education. Indeed, its processes are quite simple. And if man were not somebody—and no mere copy of his race, it would be perfect rearing. In the same manner as all wild animals, and all fishes and insects of the same species and kind have a like mark in the same spot, we should be identical, as we have the same tastes, tongue, creed and tendencies. But one man is not a set copy of the race, and that is why this style of education is far from being simple by its effects. Men so vary that innumerable methods must be invented to reduce, stupefy and extinguish individual thought. And so the success is only partial while perpetually disarranging matters. At every instant, by some fissure, the internal initiatory force bursts violently outwards and produces momentous explosions, commotions and disorders. And where nothing is self-produced and force rests as the outer authority, evil fer-

ments at the bottom. Under seeming order, hide sullen revolutions, the tares swelling in abnormal existence, apathy and death.

That system is bad which produces such fruit, and engenders all puzzles though it may seem simple.

The other system is the opposite extreme. It is letting the children grow up for themselves. The parts are reversed, for the parents are here for the progeny. Scarcely is the child born before he becomes the hub. Before the curly pate bows down the white head of grandfather and the hale one of father. His ba! ba! is their law; a wag of his fingers suffices. When he cries a little loudly in his crib, at night, there is nobody too tired not to run to the rescue—he will set the whole household on foot. This last arrival is not long before perceiving that he is the autocrat and before he walks, he feels the vertigo of power. It only grows with him and embellishes him. All are at his orders: parents, relations, teachers and servants. He accepts the homage and even the immolation of his neighbors; he treats as rebellious subjects whoever does not step aside as he totters along. There is none but He! the only one,

the perfect and infallible! Too late it is seen that they gave themselves a master and what a master! oblivious of sacrifices, without respect and even pity. He does not hold them in any account to whom he owes his life and all, and he goes through life without a law or curb.

This education takes a social form likewise. It flourishes wherever the past has no weight, where history begins with the living, where there is no tradition, discipline, or respect, where all those representing public order wince unto the first upstart whose force consists in bawling loudly and respecting no one. It ensures the reign of fleeting passions, and the triumph of internal arbiters. I compare these two training-schools, one exaltation of the many and the other that of the one—the absolutism of tradition and the tyranny of the upstart—and I pronounce one and the other alike reprehensible. But the more dire of all is the combination of the twain, producing parties half-automatic, half-despotic, oscillating unceasingly between the sheeplike spirit of knocking under, and that of revolt or overruling.

Children should be reared neither for themselves nor for their parents; for man is no

more intended to be a leading character than a mere sample. He should be reared for life. The end of their education is to aid them to become active members of their kind, brotherly powers, and free servitors of the commonwealth. It is muddling life, deforming it, and sowing germs of disorder to pursue education inspired by other principles.

If the child's destiny is to be set down in one word, "The Future" rises to the lips. The child is the Future, which is saying all: past pains, present efforts and hopes. "Child!" is incapable of measuring the range from when education commences. For it is the moment when he is delivered up to the might of actual impressions. Who ought to shed the first enlightenment and set him in the way he must pursue? His parents—*the* educators. But if they will reflect ever so little, they will see that their work is not confined to the child and themselves, but that they exercise powers and administer non-personal interests. Their son should appear all the time to them as a future citizen. Under that engrossing thought, they will have two cares making a complete unity together: care for the individual, initiative power in the germ in the child

for growth, and the social destination of that power. At no period of their action over him may they forget that this little being entrusted to their cares, ought to be himself and yet a brother. These dual conditions, far from excluding themselves, never meet but when combined in indissoluble union. It is impossible to love one another, be brotherly and give over to the rest, if not master of one's self; and, reciprocally, none can have self-possession and grasp what is distinctive within him, without going down through the roughnesses of his superficial existence to the natural sources, where a man is allied to man by intimate associations.

To help a child to become himself and still be brotherly, he must be defended against the violent and pernicious effect of disorderly forces. These are outward and inward. The former are threatened by not only material dangers, but by the furious meddling of stranger wills; the other, by exaggerated self, and all the whims engendered by it. The outer peril is the greater as it may spring from the abusive influence of educators. The right of the stronger power introduces itself into education with extreme facility. To educate

properly this right should be renounced; that is, abnegation should be made of the interior sentiment of personality, which transforms us into enemies of others, even to our children. Our authority is not good unless derived from a superior. In this case, not only is it salutary but indispensable, becoming the best guarantee in its turn against the greatest internal peril menacing the being: that of exaggerating one's own importance. At the dawn of life, so great is the vivacity of personal impressions that the balance is kept by submitting to the steadying influence of a calm, superior will. The mainspring of education is to represent that will unto a child in a manner as continuous and disinterested a state as possible. Then educators represent what is most to be respected. They give to the being entering upon life the impression of something foregoing them, surpassing them and developing them, but not crushing them; on the reverse, their will and all the influence they transmit become nutritive elements for its own energy. Thus to sway influence is to cultivate fecund obedience, whence is born free characters. The purely personal authority of parents, masters, and institutions is to

the child what the thick weeds are to the young plant under which it withers and dies. Impersonal authority, belonging to the man who firstly submitted to the venerable realities he wishes to bend the child's individual fancies to, resembles a pure and luminous atmosphere. It is assuredly active and forms our own life, while influencing us in its own way. Without this authority, no education. To watch over, direct and resist, these form the educator's functions; he ought to appear to the child not like a quickset hedge which at a pinch may be skipped over provided the leap is proportioned to the height, but like a transparent wall through which one perceives immovable realities, laws, boundaries, truths, against which there is no possible action. Out of this arises the respectfulness—the faculty to conceive what is greater than self; the respect magnifying us, and making us modest while setting us free. That is the law of education as regards simplicity. It may be set down in these words: Make men Free and Respectful—men of manhood and brotherly-loving.

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Let us draw from this principle some practical applications.

For the reason that the Child is the Future, he must be linked to the past by reverence. We ought to reinvest traditions in their most practical and impressive shape to make a deep print. Here is the exceptional place bound to be held in a household and in a family by the ancient documents, the cultivation of memories, of forefathers, and by extension the story of the old homestead. It is above all to the young that we are accomplishing duty by assigning all honor to the grandsires, parents. Nothing speaks more forcibly to a child and develops the feeling of modesty than to see his father and his mother keep an attitude of respect on all occasions towards the Old Man, though infirm. It is a lesson upon perpetual things not to be withstood. For it to have its full force, it is necessary that a tacit agreement should reign between all the grown-up folks. In childish eyes they are one body bound to understand and respect each other under penalty of weakening educational authority. In this body must be comprised the servants.

A servant is a great figure in the household

and the same respect is wounded when a servant is treated with lack of regard by a child as the grandparent or father. As soon as a youth addresses an arrogant or impolite word to an elder, the child has left a path he ought not to stray from, and if the overseers neglect to warn him, they will soon perceive by his bearing that the foe has crept into his bosom.

It is a mistake to believe that a child is naturally devoid of respectfulness and to support this opinion by the too numerous examples of irreverence in tender age. Respect is a want in the child. His moral appetite longs for it. He dimly yearns to respect and admire. But when he does not meet dues for that aspiration, it wilts and is spoilt. By our lack of cohesion and mutual deference, we grown-up persons discredit our own sakes every day in young eyes, as well as all respectable things. We inoculate him with the evil spirit whose effects turn against us.

This painful truth appears nowhere more sharply than in the relations between employers and employées such as we have created. Our social harshness and want of kindness and plain dealing fall back on our children's head. Certainly there are a few heads of

families who understand that they had better lose some thousands than their children lose respect for their attendants, who represent in the house the humble. Nothing is more true. As much as you like, maintain the distances and established agreement about position, but on condition that you do not forget that your servants are as much men as we are. On them you impose formulas of bearing and speech, outward tokens of the respect owed you. Teach such conduct also to your children and behave likewise yourself, to make the servants understand that you respect their individual worthiness as you desire yourself respected. You have here, at any hour, an excellent field of study for training yourself in practice of that mutual regard essentially a condition for social weal. I fear that it will be little profited by. You exact respect, but you do not foster it. Consequently, you most often obtain hypocrisy and the unexpected but supplementary result: pride is raised in your children. These two factors combined pile up huge difficulties for that future which you ought to have kept clear. I have, therefore, reason to say that you met a sensible loss that

day when by your habits and practices you pared away respect.

Why should I not say so? It strikes me that most of us work towards this lessening. Everywhere, in all social parts, I remark that rather a bad spirit is cherished in nurseries—a spirit of reciprocal scorn. In town, the one is jeered at whose hands are horny and dress for working in; there the farm hand for wearing overalls. Youngsters reared with this mood will make bad fellow-citizens in their time. All this sadly lacks the simplicity which keeps willing men in all stages from walking together while hampered by the class fetters separating them.

If caste makes respect dwindle, party spirit does as much, whatever it be. In some circles, the adolescent are so brought up that they venerate only one country—their own; one side of politics, their parents' and teachers'; one religion, that they are folded in. Is it fancied that so can be fashioned men to respect religion, country and the law? Is it pure metal—this respect to be given solely to what belongs to us and we can handle? Singular blindness of cliques and coteries, arrogating with so much ingenious complacency the title

of schools of respect—which, barring themselves, respect nothing. In the depths of their hearts they say: "We are the religion, the law and the country!" Such teaching reaps fanaticism. And if that be not the only anti-social leaven, it is certainly one of the liveliest and the worst.

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If heartfelt simplicity be an essential condition of respect, vital simplicity is its best school. Whatever be your fortunate condition, shun all that would induce your children to believe they are above others. Even though your situation enables your dressing them finely, think of the harm you do them by exciting their vanity. Preserve them from the mischief of believing that fine clothes will confer distinction, and do not in pure light-heartedness, widen by their dress and habits the spaces separating them already from their fellow-citizens. Dress them simply. If on the other hand, it calls for efforts of economy to offer your children the pleasure of elegant vestments, I beg you to reserve for a fitter occasion your spirit of sacrifice: you will risk meeting poor repayment. You scatter your coin when it should be better saved for trying

demands; you are heaping up for later a harvest of ingratitude. How dangerous it is to habituate your sons and daughters to a style surpassing your means and theirs! In the first place, it cuts into the purse; secondly, it unfolds the spirit of scorn in the very bosom of the family. If you dress your boys up like little fops, and make them believe they are superior to you, what is there amazing in their despising you in the end? You will have fed at your table the scoffer. These guests cost dearly and return not a crumb. So such expenditures.

There is no other mode of instructing children clearly resulting in their scorning their parents, their home, and the manners and toil they were brought up among. Such is a calamity. It is good only to produce a discontented legion separating by the heart-side from their cradle, origin, affinities, and all that lays the foundation of a man. Once detached from the hardy stock producing them, the vent of their straying ambition hustles them along into a pile, where they rot like leaves and rot others.

Nature does not proceed by fits and starts, but by slow and sure evolution. Let us imi-

tate her in our method of preparing a career for our children. Do not confound advancement and progress with those violent exercises called "giant strides!" and "leaps for life." Do not rear our young so that they will come to despising the work, aspirations and simplicity of the old fatherly seat; do not expose them to the wicked temptation of being ashamed of our lowliness if they should rise to fortune. A community is in a bad way when the farmer's son begins to sicken of the fields, the seaman's shun the sea, or the workwoman's daughter, in the hope of being mistaken for a heiress, prefers to stroll about the street alone, instead of on her honest parent's arm. A society is hale, on the contrary, when every member sticks to doing pretty well as the old folks did, but better, while aiming at higher things, contented for the time being with most modest duties and fulfilling them conscientiously.*

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* This is the place to speak of work in generel and its wholesome effect on education; but I have discoursed on the subject in my works, "Youth," "Justice," "Valor," etc. I beg to refer the reader to them. —The Author.

Education ought to form free men. If you wish your children reared for liberty, do it simply, and do not fear that it will injure their happiness. It will be the other thing. The more costly toys, merry parties and studied-out pleasures you give a child the less fun it will have. That is a sure indicator. Be sober in your means of rejoicing and diverting youth, and above all do not create a liking for artificial needs. Food, housing, clothing and distractions, let all be as natural and straightforward as possible. To make childlife agreeable, some parents give them idle and gluttonous habits, make them feel excitement incompatible with their age, multiply sensations and shows. They are pitiful treats. Instead of a free man, you are bringing up a slave. Sated with luxury, he will tire of it, and yet, when the dainties fall off for one reason or another, he will be unhappy, which will be a bad thing for him and you. What is worse, you will both come to sacrifice grand occasions, human dignity, truth and duty, through pure dastardliness.

Let us rear our offspring simply then; I would say almost sternly; try them with fortifying exertions and even privations. Let

them become rather such as are ready to lie on the bare ground and endure fatigues than sigh for the downy couch and the dainties of the table. You will thus make solid independent men who can be relied upon, who will not sell themselves for a mess of potage, and yet they will be happy above the main. Too easy a life saps the vitality. A man becomes used up, disenchanted, a young old man, and not to be cheered. How many young men and boys, too, are in this class! like mildew on them trails traces of our decrepitude, scepticism, vices and bad habits, contracted in our company. How much rebuke to us must such blighted youths be! What grave warnings were plowed upon their brows!

These ghosts tell us by the contrast that happiness rests in really living, active, first-hand, virgin of passion's yoke, artificial calls, and unhealthy excitements, the body having preserved itself for the faculty of enjoying broad daylight, breathing air, and the heart the capacity to love and feel with fulness all that is fine, generous and simple.

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False living bears easy thinking and stammering speech. Healthy habits, strong im-

pressions and ordinary touch with reality, naturally lead to frank speech. Lying is the slave's vice, and the coward's and the lazybone's refuge. The firm man is "free of the collar." Encourage our boys to that happy boldness of talking straight out without "chewing their tongues." What do most of them? Their characteristics have been trampled upon and levelled dead to fit in with that uniformity which is the right tone for the big herd of sheep! To think with your own wits, feel with your heart, and set forth the right word—what inconvenience, and how countrified! Oh! the atrocious education in perpetually smothering the only thing that warrants living! How many soul-murders are we guilty of! Some have been felled with ferules and some with crosses, and others gently smothered in between eiderdown pillows. All plot against independent characters. When small, we are to be looked upon as dolls and puppets; larger, we are petted on condition that we are automata like the rest of the world; when one is seen, all have been seen. Hence the failure in taking the lead, and of originality, and that platitude and monotony become the distinctive of our era. Truth will set us free; let us

teach our children to be themselves, to give out their natural notes, without cracks or *mute*. Make their fair-play a desideratum, and in their worst faults, if they make a clean breast of them, count it as a merit that they sinned without wearing a mask.

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To frankness associate bluntness in our solicitude as educators, having all possible heed for this somewhat wild troop of childhood, but so gracious and kindly disposed. Do not frighten them. Scared away from one spot, they seldom come back to it. Artlessness is not merely the sister of truth, keeper of everybody's intimate gifts, but a great power for revealing and educating. I see around me too many so-called positive folk, armed with terrifying spectacles and scissors for prying out wildlings' nests and clipping wings. They extirpate the guilenessness of life, thought, and education, and chase it beyond the realm of dreams. Under pretext of making men of boys, they prevent them being children, as if before the fall's ripe fruit there did not have to be sweet blooms, songs, and all the fairy-work of the springtide.

I crave a truce for all that is simple and

ingenuous, not only for the gentle fancies wheeling around the curly heads, but also for the lays, the legends, and the lore of the land of mystery and marvels. In the young the sense of the wonderful is the first form of that of the infinitude, without which man is a bird pinioned. Do not wean childhood away from the wonder-world, but let it keep the faculty to soar above this earthy earth, and hereafter properly value the pious and touching symbols of vanished ages, when human truth found expressions never replaceable by our arid logic.

CHAPTER XIV.

CONCLUSION.

I HOPE I have sufficiently pointed out the spirit and manifestations of simple life to give glimpses of the forgotten world of force and beauty. The conquerors of it are those with energy enough to clear themselves from the plaguey uselessness which embarrasses our existence. They will not be tardy in perceiving that, by throwing aside superficial gratification and puerile ambition, the faculty for happiness is augmented and with it the power for justice.

These results bear as well on public as on private life. It is incontestable that, by struggling against the tendency to show off brilliancy, by ceasing to rate the satisfying of our wishes as the goal of our activity, and by returning to moderate tastes, true life, in short—we should work towards consolidating

the family. Another spirit would breathe within our walls, creating fresh manners and a field more favorable for juvenile education. Little by little, our young folks would feel themselves drawn towards an ideal more elevated but yet more realisable. This internal transformation would in time exert its sway over the public. The same as a wall's staunchness depends on the grain of the stones and the consistency of the mortar bonding them, the energy of public life depends upon the individual grit of citizens and their power of cohesion. The high desideratum of our epoch is the culture of that social element which is the human individual. All carries us toward that element of our present organisation. By neglecting it, we expose ourselves to lose the benefits of progress and even to turn against ourselves the most persevering efforts. If in a factory where the machinery is being constantly perfected, the workman falls off in value, what will be the use of the engines which he managed? Their best points will be the very things to show at the worst the defects of the novice who handles them without discernment or without conscience. The delicate cogs of the modern machine are much

more complicated than any hand-made. Spite, bungling, or bribery may produce troubles as dreadful as in the more rudimentary body that it was of old. We must look to the standing of the man called, in any degree, to contribute towards the operation of the machine. Let him be staunch and reliable; inspired with the central law of life; be a man and a brother. In and about us all simplifies and unifies under the direction of this law, the same for all, and to which each brings his actions; for our essential interests are identical, not contrary. By cultivating the spirit of simplicity, we will give public life greater cohesion.

The phenomena of decomposition and dilapidation bring us to the same cause: lack of cohesion and solid attachment. It can never be said too often that the triumph of petty greed of castes, coteries, local claims and the keen seeking for personal rise, are counter to social welfare and by a fatal consequence to individual happiness. That is the main lesson from the unsubduable wrangling of our unappeasable selfishness. A society in which each is engaged "for his own hand," is merely organised disorder. We are a deal

like those brawlers who clamor for their family to lend them advantages but do not apply when they want to be honored. On all steps of the social scale, we are making the most of ourselves. We all pretend to be creditors and no one avows he is in debt. Our connection with our fellows is to notify them more or less sweetly or bullyingly to clear themselves as regards us. In this state of mind we shall reach no good end. For at bottom it is the spirit of privilege, eternal enemy of the common law, the lasting hindrance to brotherly coming together.

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In a conference held in 1882, M. Renan said that a nation is a family, "in spirit," adding that "The essence of a nation is that all should have many things in common, and also forget a lot." It is important to know what should be forgot and what borne in mind, not only in the past but in everyday life. What divides us, encumbers our minds, and what unites us clears them. In the brightest corner of his memory every one enshrines the sharp, lively feeling of his accessory quality, which is to be held as he is agriculturist, dignitary, public character, artist, author, politician, or

even a sectary; but he keeps in the background his essential part, to be a fellow-citizen and a man. He hardly holds a theoretical notion of this. It follows that what occupies us and dictates our moves, is precisely what parts us from others, and there is hardly any room left for that spirit of union which is as the soul of the people.

It farthermore ensues that we foster by preference the worst memories in our fellows. Men animated with haughty, exclusive, partisan spirit daily brush up against one another. They cannot meet without reviving the sentiment of their divisions and rivalry. They gradually heap up in mind a stock of reciprocal ill will, mistrust and grudges. All this is the evil spirit and its harvest

It must be rooted up from our field.

Remember to forget! that is what we ought to say every morning in all our doings and on all our ways! Remember the Essential and forget the trivialities! How much better one's duties as citizen would be carried out if the humblest, like the most lofty, hugged this resolve! How many good memories would be nourished in the neighbor's mind if solely amiable actions were shown him; by sparing

him taunts, he will be obliged to say, though he has hatred in his breast: "*This*, I cannot forget!"

Simplicity is a great magician. He corrects asperities, builds bridges over partings and dissensions; bringing together hands and hearts. His forms are infinite in number. But never has he one more admirable than when he lets the light through broken barriers of situations, interests and prejudices, triumphing over the highest obstacles, and leading those who seemed parted forever, to the parted, that they may be understood, esteem and love one another! That is the true social tie, and it is with such that a people are bound up to flourish.

THE END.